SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY
3 1223 06425 6098

BOOK NO. 973 Sch68e
ACCESSION 98314

DATE DUE

SEP 4 1981			
		JAN - 6 1995	

DEMCO 38-297

Eighty Years of Union

Being a Short History of the United States
1783–1865

By
JAMES SCHOULER

NEW YORK
DODD, MEAD & COMPANY
1913

Copyright, 1880, 1882, 1885, 1889, 1891, 1894, 1899, 1903
By JAMES SCHOULER.

Published September, 1903.

973
Sch 68e
99314

S. F. PUBLIC LIBRARY

BURR PRINTING HOUSE,
NEW YORK.

PUBLISHERS' NOTICE

THE present book of moderate size, which has been prepared at the special request of some eminent educators, pursues the plan lately favored in "The Struggle for a Continent" by the publishers of Mr. Parkman's histories. Instead of abridgment or condensation of the materials comprised in the original work, a selection has been made of suitable passages, so that the reader may have before him a consecutive narrative, in the historian's own words and original expression, so far as the present space permits.

The literary advantage of such a treatment is obvious. And it is hoped that the present volume will be found both useful and stimulating to the busy student and casual general reader, whether as embodying a substitute for the author's more comprehensive work of six volumes, or so as to induce in due time their closer perusal. For ample details and a broader treatment of this earliest epoch of our nation's history in the full push of progression the original work should still be studied; but within the present compass of some four hundred pages the general thread of the narrative will be found preserved. The author has personally supervised this publication.

August 22, 1903.

S.F. PUBLIC LIBRARY

CONTENTS

The references in parenthesis are to the volume and pages of the original History of the United States from which extracts are made for the present volume.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

PAGE

§ I. The Thirteen Confederate States, 1783-87.—§ II. The Constitutional Convention, May 14-September 17, 1787.—§ III. A More Perfect Union, 1787-1789.

The United States of America in 1783 (I, 1-5)..... 1
Hamilton and Madison as reformers (I, 26-32)..... 4
Origin of our political parties (I, 53-60)..... 9
Struggle of Federalists and Anti-Federalists (I, 60-69)..... 12

CHAPTER II.

FIRST ADMINISTRATION OF GEORGE WASHINGTON.

§ I. Period of First Congress. March 4, 1789-March 3, 1791.—§ II. Period of Second Congress. March 4, 1791-March 3, 1793.

Washington's inauguration at New York (I, 84-89)..... 14
The First Congress; ceremonials, etc. (I, 117, 118)..... 20
Appointments and executive rules (I, 119-124)..... 22
Washington as President; his character (I, 118-139)..... 25
Franklin and the Quaker memorial (I, 160-165)..... 35
Executive intercourse with the Senate (I, 179, 180)..... 35
New party movements and leaders (I, 219, 220)..... 36

CHAPTER III.

PAGE

SECOND ADMINISTRATION OF GEORGE WASHINGTON.

§ I. Period of Third Congress. March 4, 1793-March 3, 1795. —§ II. Period of Fourth Congress. March 4, 1795-March 3, 1797.

Immigration and the pioneer life (I, 239-245) 39
Philadelphia as capital; yellow fever (I, 250-255) 45
Politics affected by European war (I, 259, 260) 50
Jefferson and Hamilton leave cabinet (I, 270-274) 50
Jay's treaty with England (I, 308-311) 52
Speech of Fisher Ames (I, 328, 329) 54
Washington's Farewell Address (I, 345, 346) 57

CHAPTER IV.

ADMINISTRATION OF JOHN ADAMS.

§ I. Period of Fifth Congress. March 4, 1797-March 3, 1799. —§ II. Period of Sixth Congress. March 4, 1799-March 3, 1801.

Adams inaugurated President (I, 354-356) 59
Naturalization, Alien and Sedition acts (I, 410-413) 62
Kentucky and Virginia resolutions (I, 434, 435) 64
Party cabals; death of Washington (I, 462-464) 66
Washington City the capital (I, 487-490) 68
Tie of Jefferson and Burr; House elects President (I, 490-494) 69
Adams's administration reviewed (I, 505-512) 71
Downfall of Federalist party (I, 512-514) 79

CHAPTER V.

FIRST ADMINISTRATION OF THOMAS JEFFERSON.

§ I. Period of Seventh Congress. March 4, 1801-March 3, 1803.—§ II. Period of Eighth Congress. March 4, 1803-March 3, 1805.

Jefferson's inauguration (II, 1-5) 83
Appointments to office; cabinet (II, 6-15) 86
Federalists in retirement (II, 32, 33) 89
The Louisiana purchase (II, 52-58) 90
Duel and death of Hamilton (II, 70-74) 92

PAGE
Secretaries Madison and Gallatin (II, 78-80) 96
Territories and the Indians (II, 85) 98
Jefferson at the White House (II, 90-94) 99

CHAPTER VI.

SECOND ADMINISTRATION OF THOMAS JEFFERSON.

§ I. Period of Ninth Congress. March 4, 1805-March 3,1807. —§ II. Period of Tenth Congress. March 4, 1807-March 3, 1809.

British impressment and search (II, 115-118) 104
Burr's conspiracy and trial (II, 133-138) 106
Abolition of foreign slave trade (II, 145-147) 108
Napoleon and Great Britain (II, 174-176) 109
Decrees against neutral nations (II, 176) 111
President Jefferson's embargo (II, 180-183) 112
Failure of embargo (II, 197, 198, 217) 115
Retirement of Jefferson (II, 222-225) 117
Jefferson's character (II, 225-228) 120
Jefferson's friendships (II, 228, 229) 125

CHAPTER VII.

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA IN 1809.

New influence of Republic (II, 230) 127
State constitutional systems (II, 235-237) 127
Veto power and bill of rights (II, 239-241) 130
Agriculture and manufactures (II, 242-248) 132
American commerce and speculation (II, 248, 249) 133
Opportunities of the Jefferson era (II, 309) 135

CHAPTER VIII.

FIRST ADMINISTRATION OF JAMES MADISON.

§ I. Period of Eleventh Congress. March 4, 1809-March 3, 1811.—§ II. Period of Twelfth Congress. March 4, 1811-March 3, 1813.

Republican party trusted (II, 331-333) 136
Repeal of non-intercourse with offer (II, 336, 337) 137

PAGE

Napoleon accepts; Great Britain refuses (II, 339-341).... 137
Twelfth Congress and spirited leaders (II, 371)..... 139
Clay for Speaker; Calhoun's speech (II, 372-379)..... 139
Leaders prevail with Madison (II, 387, 388)..... 143
War against Great Britain (II, 395)..... 144
Orders of Council tardily suspended; Clay's speech (II, 414-416) 145

CHAPTER IX.

SECOND ADMINISTRATION OF JAMES MADISON.

§ I. Period of Thirteenth Congress. March 4, 1813-March 3, 1815.—§ II. Period of Fourteenth Congress. March 4, 1815-March 3, 1817.

The Hartford Convention (II, 473-476)..... 147
News of peace with victory (II, 476-491)..... 149
America's final divorce from Europe (II, 492)..... 149
Results of war; lessons taught (II, 501, 502)..... 150
Monroe chosen President (II, 510-512)..... 153
Overtures to reconciliation; Monroe and Jackson (II, 512, 513) 153
Madison's career reviewed (II, 513-516)..... 154

CHAPTER X.

FIRST ADMINISTRATION OF JAMES MONROE.

§ I. Period of Fifteenth Congress. March 4, 1817-March 3, 1819.—§ II. Period of Sixteenth Congress. March 4, 1819-March 3, 1821.

Monroe's inauguration (III, 1-3)..... 157
New policy and opportunities (III, 1-6)..... 159
Monroe and Washington (III, 7)..... 162
Eastern tour; era of good feeling (III, 8-16)..... 164
Clay and Crawford; Clay in opposition (III, 17-20, 34)..... 166
Spanish-American revolution (III, 25, 26)..... 169
Decay of parties; new symptoms (III, 43-47)..... 171
Internal improvements (III, 54, 55)..... 173
Jackson's popularity (III, 61-64, 84)..... 174

PAGE
Jackson and Jefferson (III, 65, 66) 177
The Seminole war (III, 84) 177
A national sentiment; Florida, etc. (III, 107-109) 178
Financial distress of 1819-20 (III, 120, 121) 180
Foreign relations; Spain (III, 121, 122) 181
American slavery reviewed (III, 134-137) 182
Southern planting interests (III, 145-147) 185
The Missouri controversy (III, 147-170) 187
Compromise of North and South (III, 171-173) 187

CHAPTER XI.

SECOND ADMINISTRATION OF JAMES MONROE.

§ I. Period of Seventeenth Congress. March 4, 1821-March 3, 1823.—§ II. Period of Eighteenth Congress. March 4, 1823-March 3, 1825.

Character of Monroe (III, 202-206) 190
Appearance and manners (III, 206-208) 193
Washington City in 1821 (III, 212-214) 195
Social life at the capital (III, 215) 198
Census of 1820; New York's advance (III, 229-231) 199
Calhoun a national leader (III, 261-266) 201
Plans of Holy Alliance (III, 286, 287) 203
Monroe's famous message (III, 287-289) 204
The Monroe doctrine (III, 288-291) 205
Clay and Webster as leaders (III, 298, 299) 207
Webster's oratory (III, 299-302) 208
Lafayette's visit; Monroe's peaceful retirement (III, 334, 335) 211

CHAPTER XII.

ADMINISTRATION OF JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

§ I. Period of Nineteenth Congress. March 4, 1825-March 3, 1827.—§ II. Period of Twentieth Congress. March 4, 1827-March 3, 1829.

Era of good feeling ends (III, 336, 337) 214
Calhoun and John Randolph (III, 369, 370) 215
Adams's administration reviewed (III, 398-407) 216, 218
The two Adamses compared (III, 398, 399) 217

PAGE

CHAPTER XIII.

FIRST ADMINISTRATION OF ANDREW JACKSON.

§ I. Period of Twenty-first Congress. March 4, 1829-March 3, 1831.—§ II. The United States in 1831.—§ III. Period of Twenty-second Congress. March 4, 1831-March 3, 1833.

Jackson inaugurated; the people's day (III, 451-453) 228
Spoils of office (III, 453-460) 230
Calhoun and the nullifiers (III, 482) 232
The Hayne and Webster debate (III, 482-486) 234
Liberty and union (III, 486) 237
The Union in 1831 (III, 507) 238
American character (III, 512-514) 238
American manners (IV, 4, 5) 243
American methods in business (IV, 5-8) 245
Growth of the West (IV, 27, 28) 247
Calhoun's disappointed ambition (IV, 36-39) 250
High and low tariffs (IV, 55-58) 251
A new campaign; party names changing (IV, 72-77) 253
Tariff nullification in 1833 (IV, 98, 99, 108) 255
Calhoun in the Senate (IV, 109-111) 257

CHAPTER XIV.

SECOND ADMINISTRATION OF ANDREW JACKSON.

§ I. Period of Twenty-third Congress. March 4, 1833-March 3, 1835.—§ II. Period of Twenty-fourth Congress. March 4, 1835-March 3, 1837.

Jackson's zenith of popularity (IV, 112-115) 261
Errors of his second term (IV, 115) 264
Jackson's eastern tour (IV, 119-121) 265
Modes of travel; stage, canal, etc. (IV, 124) 267
Era of the railway (IV, 125-127) 268
John Quincy Adams in the House (IV, 185-188) 270
Whig party formed; Whigs and Democrats (IV, 191-196) .. 273
New public disorders (IV, 201, 202) 278
Garrison and the Abolitionists (IV, 210-213) 279

PAGE
Taney succeeds Marshall; the Supreme Court (IV, 232, 233). 282
Jackson's administration reviewed (IV, 265-272)..... 283
Character of Jackson (IV, 268-272)..... 286
Jackson and Jefferson contrasted (IV, 272, 273)..... 291

CHAPTER XV.

ADMINISTRATION OF MARTIN VAN BUREN.

§ I. Period of Twenty-fifth Congress. March 4, 1837-March 3, 1839.—§ II. Period of Twenty-sixth Congress. March 4, 1839-March 3, 1841.

Disaster and the independent treasury (IV, 283, 284)..... 293
Alliance of Seward, Weed and Greeley (IV, 331-334).... 295
Van Buren's defeat; his character (IV, 349-352)..... 297

CHAPTER XVI.

ADMINISTRATION OF WILLIAM HENRY HARRISON.

Period of Twenty-seventh Congress. March 4, 1841-April 4, 1841.

Early death of Harrison (IV, 364-366)..... 301

CHAPTER XVII.

ADMINISTRATION OF JOHN TYLER.

§ I. Period of Twenty-seventh Congress. April 4, 1841-March 3, 1843.—§ II. Period of Twenty-eighth Congress. March 4, 1843-March 3, 1845.

Succession of Vice-President (IV, 367, 368)..... 304
Tyler's past record (IV, 370-372)..... 304
Fugitive slaves and State collision (IV, 427, 428)..... 307
Single-term theory; Tyler's apostasy (IV, 431, 432)..... 308
Tyler's annexation scheme (IV, 440)..... 310
Conventions and the electric telegraph (IV, 469, 470)..... 311
Texas annexation in Congress (IV, 486, 487)..... 312
Tyler takes the responsibility (IV, 487, 488)..... 313
Tyler's character (IV, 491-494)..... 314

PAGE

CHAPTER XVIII.

ADMINISTRATION OF JAMES KNOX POLK.

§ I. Period of Twenty-ninth Congress. March 4, 1845-March 3, 1847.—§ II. The Mexican War. May, 1846-September, 1847.—§ III. Period of Thirtieth Congress. March 4, 1847-March 3, 1849.

Polk as Chief Executive (IV, 496-498) 317
The Oregon settlement (IV, 514) 320
Polk's low-tariff policy (IV, 514-516) 320
Texas annexation and the Mexican War (IV, 518, 519) 322
War; the railway, telegraph and post-office (IV, 549, 550) .. 324
Generals Scott and Taylor (V, 3-8) 325
Conquest and the Wilmot proviso (V, 66-70) 331
Lincoln and Davis in Congress (V, 76-79) 334
Death of Adams at the Capitol (V, 88-90) 337
Spoliation of Mexico (V, 123, 124) 339
Polk's character and death (V, 125-127) 340

CHAPTER XIX.

ADMINISTRATION OF ZACHARY TAYLOR.

Period of Thirty-first Congress. March 4, 1849-July 9, 1850.

Our new Pacific acquisition (V, 129, 130) 343
California gold and a new free State (V, 152) 345
Slavery's dismay; portents of disunion (V, 154) 346
The Senate speeches of March, 1850 (V, 170-172) 347
Seward's "higher law"; Calhoun dies (V, 171) 349
Taylor and the Senate plan (V, 189) 349
Taylor's sudden death (V, 189, 190) 349

CHAPTER XX.

ADMINISTRATION OF MILLARD FILLMORE.

§ I. Period of Thirty-first Congress. July 9, 1850-March 3, 1851.—§ II. Period of Thirty-second Congress. March 4, 1851-March 3, 1853.

Eulogy and the succession (V, 191, 192) 352
Fillmore accepts the Clay plan (V, 192) 353

PAGE
Compromise measures of 1850 (V, 204-208) 354
Anti-slavery sentiment coerced (V, 213, 214) 355
New attitude of parties (V, 242, 243) 356
Deaths of Clay and Webster (V, 245-248) 357
Democrats elect President; downfall of Whig party (V, 249) 359
Fillmore's administration reviewed (V, 257, 258) 360

CHAPTER XXI.

ADMINISTRATION OF FRANKLIN PIERCE.

§ I. Period of Thirty-third Congress. March 4, 1853-March 3, 1855.—§ II. Period of Thirty-fourth Congress. March 4, 1855-March 3, 1857.

Douglas and the Kansas-Nebraska bill; squatter sovereignty (V, 279, 280) 363
Missouri Compromise of 1820 violated (V, 289-292) 364
The North aroused; new political fusion (V, 301-303) 367
Party movements; Know Nothings, etc. (V, 304, 305) 369
Fredom or slavery in Kansas (V, 315-321) 370
New Republican party at the North (V, 351-356) 372

CHAPTER XXII.

ADMINISTRATION OF JAMES BUCHANAN.

§ I. Period of Thirty-fifth Congress. March 4, 1857-March 3, 1858.—§ II. Period of Thirty-sixth Congress. March 4, 1859-March 3, 1861.

National Democracy perverted (V, 371, 372) 374
Rebellion in Utah (V, 403, 404) 375
Douglas and Lincoln in Illinois (V, 411-413) 377
New territorial dogmas (V, 414) 380
The "irrepressible conflict" (V, 415) 381
Southern territorial demands (V, 428-430) 382
John Brown's invasion (V, 443, 444) 385
Democratic schism; Republicans at Chicago (V, 457-459) 386
Lincoln nominated and elected President (V, 460) 389
President Buchanan falters (V, 472-474) 390

PAGE
Secession and a Southern Confederacy (V, 474, 475)..... 391
Approach of civil war (V, 507-511)..... 392
Washington a beleaguered city (V, 511, 512)..... 396

SUPPLEMENTARY CHAPTER.

ADMINISTRATION OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN.*

March 4, 1861.—April 15, 1865.

Lincoln's administration reviewed; personal character (VI, 624-633) 398
Fame of Lincoln; his reconciling disposition (VI, 632, 633).. 407

*See foot-note on page 408.

INDEX 409

EIGHTY YEARS OF UNION

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

§ I. The Thirteen Confederate States, 1783-87.—§ II. The Constitutional Convention, May 14-September 17, 1787.—§ III. A More Perfect Union, 1787-1789.

AT the close of our Revolution the Union States of America comprised the same thirteen republics whose representatives, assembled at Independence Hall, had, in the name of the American people, so boldly flung defiance at George III. seven years earlier, declaring the united colonies absolved from all allegiance to the British crown. "Free and independent States," they were then proclaimed; rightfully free and independent of the mother country, the king was after a long and stubborn contest compelled to acknowledge them. But meantime, they had, by mutual assent, advanced to the condition of a confederacy, intended to be perpetual, whose style, never since relinquished, was foreshown in their charter of independence.*

* As to the style, "United States of America," cf. Articles of Confederation, Art. 1; Constitution of United States, Preamble; Declaration of Independence, closing paragraph. These were the old thirteen Colonies or States: New Hampshire, Massachusetts (or Massachusetts Bay), of which at this time Maine constituted a district, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia.

Though covering less than one-fourth of its present territorial space, the domain of the United States was at this period vast, and, as compared with European nations, magnificent; comprising an area, in fact, so great for experimenting in self-government that sagacious statesmen of the Old World prophesied with confidence a speedy failure. On the east and west the United States had natural boundaries, the Atlantic Ocean and the broad Mississippi. The chain of great lakes stood out like a bastion on the northern or British frontier, whose line, however, ran unevenly, and at the northeast and northwest corners promised occasion for further dispute. The southern boundary, fixed by the treaty of peace at parallel 30°, was the most uncertain and unsatisfactory of all; for leaving out of view what the parties to that treaty might themselves have intended, the title of the neighboring possessions vested substantially in Spain, a stealthy foe to the United States, who had artfully kept out of the negotiations at Paris, and still guarded, as well as her decaying strength would permit, the mouth of the Mississippi and the Gulf coast.

Fortunately for our infant confederacy, the present sparseness of population on these long frontiers favored a postponement of controversies, which the law of human increase must eventually have determined in her own favor. Of the extensive jurisdiction possessed by virtue of her own sovereignty, and that of individual States, much was a wilderness, given over to the bear and bison and their red pursuer; woods and canebrakes marked the sites of cities since illustrious. Log-forts and trading-posts were the precursors of civilization on the northwestern frontier; and Great Britain's delay in surrendering them according to the terms of the

treaty, for which one and another pretext was assigned, proved a serious hindrance to the settlement of that region. South of the Ohio River a movement from Virginia and the States adjacent, into what was called the Kentucky country, had already begun. But nearly the whole population of the United States was at that time confined to the eastern slope of the Appalachian Mountains. Commercial traffic kept the inhabitants close to the sea and its immediate tributaries. New York State, west of the Schenectady cornfields, remained an Indian country, the home of the once warlike Five Nations. The American Union was in effect an Atlantic confederacy; every State bordered upon that ocean or its tide-waters, whose eastern waves washed Europe; and to the Americans of 1783 who turned westward, the blue Alleghanies seemed as remote as did the Pillars of Hercules to the ancients.

The total population of the United States in 1783 may be estimated at somewhat less than three and a half million souls, or only one-eleventh of the number of inhabitants shown by the census of 1870. This population appears to have been distributed in three nearly equal portions: New England holding one-third; another belonging to the Middle States, namely, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware; while the Southern States took the residue. Virginia, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania were the most populous States of the confederacy; Georgia and Rhode Island the least.

Not all of these three and a half millions, scarcely more, probably, than four-fifths of them, could be reckoned as free inhabitants. Allowing for some fifty thousand free persons of color scattered through the country, there must have been at this period no less than

six hundred thousand men, women, and children, held in servitude to white masters, and utterly denied the exercise of political rights. They were of African origin; and so conspicuous a part in colonizing the New World had been borne by this traffic with the dark continent, that American slavery, unlike that familiar in the records of ancient history, came to exist purely as a race institution; as the subjection, not of debtors or vanquished enemies, but of an alien, uncouth-looking people, whom the Caucasian could hardly regard without mirth and contempt, even when moved to compassion for their wrongs. Such a slavery is the hardest of all to eradicate from a community; for the oppressed must win genuine respect before the oppressor will admit him to full companionship and social equality, and slow must be that opportunity.

The resistless logic of one burning sentence, seared into the American mind for nearly a century, has, more than all else that was ever written or spoken, wrought the downfall of slave institutions in the United States. That sentence, the statement of truths "self-evident" in the Declaration of Independence, found its way into one State constitution after another. It has been for successive generations a bosom text; and incorporated moreover into the charters of Spanish-American republics as yet less favored, it serves everywhere as an inspiration to struggling humanity.

Two young men now appear upon the scene, whose six years of united labor did more for establishing our present constitutional union than the work of any other ten Americans, Washington, perhaps, excepted, in whom both confided, and whose prodigious personal in-

fluence was discreetly used to promote their ends. These were Alexander Hamilton, of New York, and James Madison, of Virginia; each representing a powerful State averse to Federal aggrandizement, which must nevertheless be won over; and both at the threshold of a great national career.

The younger, and undoubtedly the more brilliant of the two, was Hamilton, a man of slight figure but strongly impressive presence, erect in bearing, singularly self-possessed, having the air of a Cæsar. His face was a handsome one, such as dangerously captivates women, and beamed with intelligence; he had an eye piercing and expressive, a firm-set mouth which betokened promptness and decision of character, an open and fearless countenance. His was one of those rare minds whence leap ideas clad in full armor. He would not only unfold a plan of his own so as to present the strongest arguments for its adoption, but anticipate every objection and counterplan which others would be likely to urge against it. His talent as an administrator was remarkable; neither principle nor detail escaped him; he conceived and executed with equal facility. This mind of marvellous fertility, this self-confidence which inspired by its audacity, were the endowments of a youth as yet scarcely turned of twenty-five. But this prodigy, the idol of aristocratic circles in New York, and a recognized leader of the American bar, was weighted in the race for public honors, as precocious men are apt to be, by his own excess of confidence, his impetuosity, and the disposition to force rather than inculcate the measures upon which he had set his heart. He had not great tact, but set his foot contemptuously to work the treadles of slower minds. Hence Hamilton devised better than he could bring to pass, and,

wounding the pride of rivals whose co-operation was indispensable to success, he got unhorsed when he should have been spurring on. His political following was always strong, but he suffered that of his opponents to become stronger, which proved his own bad generalship.

But more than this, Hamilton was not a stanch believer in republics or the American experiment. He was not American, but a Briton, transplanted and fed upon Plutarch. An alien, of obscure parentage in the British West Indies, and one of desultory training, he remained, except for the influence of his ancient heroes, British in temperament through life, an adapter of British institutions and methods, like a tailor who fits different coats from the same pattern. Equality, social or political, he did not relish, though he was a friend of negro emancipation. Popular government, our latter-day rule of public opinion, he never could and never wished to comprehend. He wished "good men," as he termed them, to rule; meaning the wealthy, the well-born, the socially eminent, like those among whom he moved in his adopted city. No aristocrat is more confirmed than one admitted into the charmed circle, whose own kindred are at a convenient distance; and Hamilton's claim to social recognition no Whig could dispute after Washington had taken him into his military family, and Schuyler given him a daughter in marriage. Self-reliance, self-confidence, with its usual attendant faults and virtues, sprang necessarily out of such a life; and the passion for fame had burned strongly in his boyish bosom before either a country or a cause could be discerned. Hamilton had a high sense of honor, certainly, an ambition which respected the verdict of history. His ideal of government was

not, however, a high one; for he believed that mankind were to be managed and cajoled by some magnanimous ruler. Crude suggestions like these pervaded his best schemes of civil polity; giving an impression which careless conversations might have confirmed, that Hamilton was at heart a despiser of commonplace happiness, a hero-worshipper, and, theoretically at least, a British monarchist. And indeed there was that about him which might perhaps have rendered him a dangerous man under European surroundings; for, besides rating his military above his own civil qualities, Hamilton displayed self-will, a certain capriciousness of temper, an unquenchable thirst for glory and distinction, and a tendency to the false illusions of fatalism and the romance of manifest destiny. But Hamilton's ambition was noble, incapable at all events of mean intrigue for the sake of personal advancement; if ever fame's conqueror, he would have wished to be a generous one; and the dream of empire could only be fulfilled when the crisis demanded the man. That crisis never came; and for moving a world whose leverage was the average sense of the people, one of this temper could hope for little permanent opportunity.

A far different man was Madison; six years Hamilton's senior, and yet a young leader for so crowded an hour. He, too, was of under-stature, and when starched up to his full dignity had not a little primness of aspect. His manners were reserved and shy, like one given to serious contemplation; the color of his cheeks came and went; strangers were impressed by him as by some plain gentleman farmer. But entering Congress young, Madison was not long in convincing his colleagues of his real sterling qualities, prominent among which were industry, method, pa-

tience, soundness of judgment, calmness of temper, and unimpeachable integrity. His leadership was all the more readily conceded by elders, none of whom were superiors, inasmuch as he was perceived to be a youth of singular modesty and discretion. Unlike Hamilton, Madison was a man of peace, whose sole ambition was directed to the pursuit of civil administration under American methods and by convincing other minds. American-born, the scion of an influential family in the Old Dominion, educated at Princeton College,—the nursery in that era of American statesmen,—a man of independent means, he was a product thoroughly indigenous; and having joined the new school of aristo-democrats in his native State to become a disciple and favorite of Jefferson, it is not strange that he devoted his talents to public life, nor that so doing, he was on the highroad to success. There was none of that personal magnetism in Madison such as warmed men's hearts to Hamilton or Jefferson, but neither did he repel, and the respect of his opponents he rarely lost. He had remarkable aptitude for avoiding personal quarrels. As a debater, Madison moved others by his lucid, dispassionate, judicial style of reasoning, not by a fiery appeal. His espousal of reform was directed to plucking the fruit as it ripened; he seemed, indeed, an umpire at this era, rather than a party-man, feeling, to use his favorite expression, for some middle ground. Mediocrity which forbears will win more in politics than a genius which irritates; but Madison, though a statesman of inferior fibre to Hamilton, was far above the average. The danger was, that a youth of such sobriety might effloresce into a tasteless and timid manhood.

The complement of two such minds was most aus-

picious for the country. The cause in which they now heartily conjoined, as never in later years, was that of procuring a federal government whose powers should be commensurate with the needs of the country. Their prominence at this date was favored by the singular dearth of famous popular leaders for the pregnant occasion. James Otis was dead. Patrick Henry's influence helped to swell State pride, and so did that of George Clinton. Hancock and Samuel Adams appeared lukewarm Unionists, better able to pull down than build up, and both were for the time in retirement. Jefferson and John Adams had diplomatic posts abroad. The aged Franklin, just returning from his famous mission at France to find himself elected chief executive of Pennsylvania under an ill-jointed constitution, had enough care in holding that distracted commonwealth together. Of all the patriots who had been foremost in the cause of independence, only John Jay and Robert Morris remained in the home service, and they in such routine employment as forbade the attempt of either to direct a popular movement. Washington himself, not unconscious of his surpassing influence, was too delicate and just a man to conduct a popular revolution whose most likely issue would be to place him at the head of affairs; and, keeping in reserve, he left others to guide, particularly his two young friends, one of whom he was connected with by neighborly ties, and the other he loved like an own son. In private correspondence he avowed himself in favor of liberal amendments; or, as a last resort, the convention.

We are now led to inquire briefly into the origin of political parties in the United States.

The two great subjects which most enlist, and at the same time distract, the passions and opinions of mankind, are religion and politics; and the more universal in church or state the concession of a right to think and act independently, the stronger becomes the tendency of the mass to separate into parties. Progress is the law of our being; but the true direction of human progress is stated differently; and, whether to accomplish or check innovation, men combine under choice leaders and concert plans for influencing their fellowmen. In some wiser age, when truth triumphs, and passion puts out her torch, a general assimilation, or at least toleration of views is possible, but such an age history has never found. Nor is it certain that individualism and indifference are the elements of a perpect state of society, more than blind submission to an authority which refuses to be questioned.

Among ancient nations, the Athenian and Roman republics more especially, flourished political parties, whose best achievement was to advance the condition of the common people and give them a share in honors at first absorbed by a privileged class. Modern parties have a similar tendency. But while human nature is always the same, the conditions of the old and new civilization greatly differ. Political parties take their best scope where the general love of liberty is pure; where thought and action are free; and where political results may be worked out in a common subservience to law and order. After all, a party is but a political agency, an instrument of the people; and the agent or servant should not be above his master.

The first political fact of American history to confront us is that in each colony during the early period a controversy, waged between proprietaries and the

body of settlers, ended in the transfer of fundamental authority from the former class to legislatures representing the latter. Those privileged to rule under the royal seal and mandate yielded, however reluctantly, to the demands of a popular rights party.

Political parties must, therefore, have contended on American soil in the earliest era of colonization; radically distinguished, perhaps, though not wholly unselfish, by the distrust of the one and the confidence of the other in man's capacity for self-government. One party set much by privilege, royalty, and the power to compel; the other was jealous of external authority, and its champions were in heart more nearly rebels against Great Britain than they cared to own. Religion tinctured these early onsets, which fortunately drew little blood; but the friends of popular rights and religious freedom were by no means coincident.

After the accession of William and Mary, America was ruled with a stronger hand; the home policy being now to recall settlers to their allegiance, repress tendencies to popular rule in disregard of the royal charters, and keep the Colonies disunited. Less responsible for the course of their own affairs, the colonists now grew more observant of events abroad, of parliamentary statutes and orders in council. To the new generation American politics had become the mere reflex of what was passing in the world of London. Hence came the British party names, "Whig" and "Tory," into vogue among Americans, with, perhaps, this prime distinction, that the colonial Tory was a British subject to the core, through all colonial oppression, while the colonial Whig believed, with Locke, in deriving government from the common consent of the governed: that theory so cherished by

our earlier colonists, and asserted, somewhat illogically, by Parliament itself for justifying the final expulsion of the Stuarts. Loyalty animated the one set, while the other ripened insensibly for independence.

When the war ended, the Whig name had been swallowed up in that broader one of patriot and American. As for Tories, the few who had not fled remained in political obscurity, irresponsible as to passing events, State pride now increased as the Union lanquished. The road to popularity in each State was to inspire an unfounded jealousy of the powers of Congress. But political issues from 1783 to 1787 were chiefly local and uninteresting.

On the whole the tendency of parties from 1783 to 1787 was to denationalize and crumble into fragments. An organization of national parties, on voting issues, was indeed unknown in America prior to the Philadelphia Convention.

But no sooner was the plan of a new Federal constitution published than the political mustering began. Local issues were postponed or absorbed into the broader national one, and in a brief space the whole country was studded with the camps of two great political parties. The initiative in this short and sharp campaign belonged, of course, to the friends of the proposed constitution. With that diversion of epithets for political effect which is so common where partisans have the chance to name opponents as well as themselves, the constitutionalists called themselves Federalists, and their adversaries Anti-Federalists. The party name of Federalist has since become historical; and yet, to speak logically, it was the Anti-Federal

party that sustained a federal plan, while the Federalist contended for one more nearly national.

Between these two parties the people balanced in opinion. The press and platform offered a common medium for persuasion, and for the next ten months America became a debating-school.

The Massachusetts Convention turned the scales; ratification was carried, but with the proposal of essential amendments to be later adopted. That action decided the country, though too slowly for the Anti-Federalists to perceive their danger or how they had been outflanked. It was not alone the example of this essential State, but her methods of amendment, that solved the whole difficulty with the people at the right moment. This flank movement literally saved the Federalist cause from disaster; for the constitution as it came from Philadelphia could not have been carried, as events proved. Had the Anti-Federalists of other States wisely accepted this as a compromise, their party might have claimed half the triumph of a bill of rights. But, with their strongest position turned, they now took their narrow stand upon utter rejection, reckless of what this might lead to. The Federalists, with more intelligence, made the new resource their own. Immediate acceptance with a generous trust that amendments would follow, became rather their ground of appeal; and confiding rightly in the good sense of the people, they insured to themselves not only victory but the best fruits of it.

CHAPTER II.

FIRST ADMINISTRATION OF GEORGE WASHINGTON.

§ I. Period of First Congress. March 4, 1789-March 3, 1791.—
§ II. Period of Second Congress. March 4, 1791-March 3, 1793.

IN New York City, at two in the afternoon, one pleasant Thursday in April, a large concourse of people, assembled at the Battery and neighboring wharves, were gazing with strained eyes down the bay. Holiday tokens appeared on every hand. The vessels in the harbor, prominent among which were the ship North Carolina and a Spanish packet, the Galveston, lay at anchor, their colors dancing in the breeze. The American flag was displayed from the fort, from old Federal Hall (where now stands the United States custom-house), and from various State and municipal buildings. Stores and dwelling-houses along the line of Wall and Queen streets flaunted streamers, mottoes, and various patriotic emblems. The crowd was greatest near the foot of Wall Street; here humanity surged, and scarcely a window was ungraced by feminine faces, sharing the general expression of happy expectation. The stairs at the landing-place of Murray's wharf had been carpeted, and the rails were hung with crimson. Between this wharf and Wall Street was a coffee-house, at which waited Governor Clinton and his military staff, with various other dignitaries. Militia companies, dragoons, and grenadiers, in bright uniform, with their

1789. April 23.

bands of music, rested in easy negligence along the sidewalks, chatting with the multitude and waiting the order of attention. Shining carriages were drawn up next the wharf. Mounted aids clattered back and forth, bearing messages.

Presently a puff of smoke came from the Galveston, followed by a loud report. At the same instant, with her yards all manned, she ran up and displayed the colors of all nations. Thirteen guns mouthed a response from the Battery. And now could be seen rounding the Spanish packet seven barges, manned by crews dressed in white, the handsomest of them pulled by twelve master pilots, a thirteenth serving as coxswain. Upon this barge, expressly built for the occasion, all eyes turned, seeking to distinguish the stateliest figure among a distinguished group in the stern-sheets. A prolonged shout went up as the water party made their way to Murray's wharf. Oars were tossed and let fall, the chief barge was made fast at the slip, and up the carpeted staircase, with his escort, mounted a tall, elderly man, of military bearing, dressed in a plain suit, with blue coat and buff waistcoat and breeches, and looking healthy, but travel-worn. Amid the plaudits of the dense throng, now fully excited, Governor Clinton, with his suite and the civic officers, welcomed him at the landing-place. The artillery fired another salute. The bells broke out madly. Washington (for it was he who arrived after this fashion) entered a state carriage, followed by the governor. Chancellor Livingston, the adjutant-general and city recorder, Jay, Knox, Osgood, and the Congressional committee, who had now disembarked, with the rest of the party which had been rowed over from Elizabethtown Point, took seats in other carriages provided

them; as did likewise the French and Spanish ambassadors. A body-guard of grenadiers attended the President-elect. The military now shouldered arms and took up the line of march. Citizens, arm-in-arm, brought up the rear. In this manner the procession wended its way up Wall and through Queen streets, to the house which the honored guest was to occupy.

Thus propitiously did George Washington enter New York, our temporary capital, as the first President-elect of the United States. Receiving after the electoral count his official notification by the hand of the venerable and trusty Charles Thomson, long secretary of the Continental Congress, he had started from Mount Vernon a week before to enter upon his new official trust. All the way hither he had been publicly honored, though setting out as a plain citizen, in his private carriage. Through Philadelphia, under an escort of city troops, he rode upon a prancing white horse, a civic crown of laurel upon his head. A surprise, arranged for him at Trenton by its fair townspeople, touched him the most deeply of all tributes. Here, at the bridge spanning the Assunpink River, which, twelve years before, he had crossed and recrossed in those midnight marches which turned America's fortunes and his own, he found an arch, supported on thirteen pillars and twined with flowers, laurel, and evergreen. It bore the inscription, "The Defender of the Mothers will be the Protector of the Daughters." As he passed beneath it young girls, dressed in white, sang an ode of welcome and strewed flowers before him.

Washington now remained a week in New York before the arrangements for his inauguration were con-

cluded, meantime receiving the hospitalities of the city and its chief inhabitants.

The last day of the month was fixed by Congress for the public ceremonies of the first Presidential induction. April 30. Though the day opened with clouds, the sun broke out resplendent before noon. Early in the morning crowds of people might be seen pouring into town over King's bridge, some on foot, others in carriages; and many, besides, had already arrived from the neighboring States to witness the ceremonies. During the forenoon prayers were offered up in all the churches. At twelve o'clock Washington proceeded, with a military escort, from his house to Federal Hall, whose situation was at the corner of Wall and Broad streets. Both houses of Congress were already assembled in the Senate chamber. Vice-President Adams, who had entered upon his official duties shortly before Washington's arrival in the city, now received the President-elect and conducted him to a chair at the upper end of the hall. After a few moments of silence, when all was ready, the assembled body and their invited guests went out upon the Senate balcony, the appointed place for the inaugural ceremony. This balcony, which fronted on Broad Street, was most appropriate, facing, as it did, a large, open space, and being long and ample, with Tuscan pillars at intervals, and cornices decked to symbolize the thirteen States.

The scene was impressive. Below appeared a swaying crowd, whose upturned, eager faces were packed in solid mass. Not a window or roof in the neighborhood was unoccupied. A loud shout went up as Washington came to the front of the balcony; cocked hats waved in the air, handkerchiefs fluttered. Placing his

hand on his heart, Washington bowed again and again, and then took his seat in an arm-chair, between two of the pillars, near a small table. His suit was a dark brown, of American manufacture; at his side he wore a dress sword; white silk stockings and shoes whose decoration consisted of plain silver buckles completed his attire. His hair, after the fashion of the day, was powdered and gathered in a bag behind, and his head remained uncovered. Though erect still in figure, with a face which flushed when he spoke, and of that indescribable bearing, kingly yet unkingly, which inspired the deepest veneration while repelling all familiarity, Washington showed some signs of approaching age. A new set of false teeth, rudely made, gave the lower part of his face an unusual aspect. To those who had long known him he seemed softening from the warrior into the sage. On one side of him stood Chancellor Livingston, his stately figure arrayed in full black; on the other side the square-set Adams, dressed more showily than Washington, but likewise in clothes of American fabric. Distinguished men in and out of Congress—among the latter Hamilton, Knox, and Steuben—surrounded this conspicuous group. The chancellor came forward and gestured to the crowd. All was silent. Washington arose once more, and while Otis, the newly chosen secretary of the Senate, held an open Bible upon a rich crimson cushion, Chancellor Livingston administered the oath of office. The words were solemnly repeated by Washington, who said, audibly, "I swear," and then, with closed eyes and in a whispering voice, "so help me, God!" kissing the book as he concluded. Chancellor Livingston now turned again to the crowd, and, waving his hand, exclaimed loudly, "Long live George Washington, President of

the United States!" Upon this signal a long, loud huzza rent the air, and cheer followed cheer. It seemed the welling up from thousands of hearts whose emotions could no longer be restrained. A flag was run up on a staff over the building, and the artillery guns at the Battery thundered the earliest of Presidential salutes.

Once more returning to the Senate-chamber, the balcony audience took their seats and listened to the inaugural address, which Washington read to the assembled Congress from his manuscript. "It was a very touching scene," writes a member of the House, "and quite of the solemn kind. His aspect, grave almost to sadness; his modesty, actually shaking; his voice deep, a little tremulous, and so low as to call for close attention; added to the series of objects presented to the mind and overwhelming it, produced emotions of the most affecting kind upon the members."

This address opened by an allusion (sincere, doubtless, as Washington's private letters show) to the anxiety and diffidence he had felt and the conflict of his own emotions between a desire of retirement in his declining years on the one hand and his disposition, on the other, to heed the summons of Congress and the country. All he dared aver was his faithful study to collect his duty from a just appreciation of all the circumstances which might affect it; and all he dared hope was that, if grateful remembrance of the past or an affectionate sensibility of this transcendent proof of the confidence of his fellow-citizens had led him into error in accepting the trust, his country would not judge him unkindly. With this modest preface he expressed his wish to receive, as he had done while at the head of the

army, a compensation which should merely defray his official expenses.

The leading theme of his discourse being personal, Washington touched but lightly upon measures of practical administration, deferring in this respect to the wisdom of Congress. But he threw out suggestions highly favorable to amending the constitution in response to the general wish, and otherwise pursuing such a course of popular conciliation as might knit the people of all the States into a harmonious union. For the prosperity of the new government he invoked once and again the favor of the Almighty Being whose wisdom had thus far directed us.

After the conclusion of this address the grave assemblage proceeded on foot to St. Paul's chapel, on Broadway, where Bishop Provoost, who had been elected one of the chaplains of Congress, offered prayers; after which Washington's escort reconducted him to his house. This ended the ceremonials of our first inauguration: an inauguration to be distinguished from all later ones in respect of place, the date in the calendar year, the decidedly religious tone given to the exercises, and a minor feature or two which reminded some of a foreign coronation. Considering the man and the occasion, nothing seemed out of tune with the popular expression. There were fireworks and illuminations in the evening.

More than once at the first session of our first Congress a clash of sentiment was perceptible between the two Houses as to the limits of their respective functions. But for the secrecy of the Senate debates this would have been plainly revealed to the country. Senators, as representing States in their integrity and

selected for long terms, at once arrogated superiority. This was indicated the very day a quorum assembled by the manner it invited the House to attend the electoral count, and more positive symptoms of an imperious disposition presently appeared. It was the House, the popular and more numerous branch, less resembling the old single Congress than the Senate, that felt the first disadvantage of such an encounter; but its dignity was quickly asserted, and the popular impulse from without soon carried it buoyantly alongside, in the assertion of a co-equal importance.

The Senate, for example, proposed sending bills to the House by a secretary, while House bills should be brought up by two Representatives. But this mark of deference the House declined to bestow, and in the end each body was left to send messages by persons of its own choice. Again, in fixing the compensation of Congress, the Senators claimed higher pay for themselves than for the Representatives, because, to be frank, they esteemed their dignity the greater. To this point they adhered with such pertinacity that, sooner than suffer the compensation bill to fail altogether, the House permitted the insertion of a clause which promised Senators a *per diem* of $7 after the 4th of March, 1795. The concession, however, had more shadow than substance, for before that date the House was too strongly intrenched to permit that a co-ordinate branch in most particulars should vaunt itself as an upper House.

The Senate, too, inclined more to ceremonials than the House. Upon Washington's arrival at New York, Congress was found disputing as to how he should be addressed; which was one cause for delaying the inauguration. Postponing the discussion, however, as was then needful, the two Houses resumed it as soon as

the exercises were over; the special question being how to frame proper replies to the inaugural address. The Senate proposed the title of "His Highness, the President of the United States of America and Protector of their Liberties," but the House would have only that simple one of the constitution, "President of the United States of America." The Senate was stubborn, and conference produced no agreement. So the House, having framed a reply after its own taste, presented it to the President; after which checkmate the Senate had next to follow with an address similarly couched or else appear ridiculous.

While the bills which created the new offices were pending before Congress, Washington matured the rules which should guide him in selecting persons to fill them. It was clear that, whatever their first misgiving, most men of wide merit who had inclined to the anti-constitutional side were now ready to lend his administration their hearty support; besides those who had lately borne the burden of establishing the new government. With such abundant material to choose from, he determined to draw round him the great characters of the country with little regard to the contrasting shades of political opinion. He was not averse to widening the field of selection, if his administration would thereby gain in the affections of the people and the respect of mankind. Of party services as such, and rewards for party work, he determined to know nothing. Personal devotion to himself called for personal, not public, remuneration; and indeed the compass of his personal following at this moment was scarcely less than unanimous America. None crowded

round to offer advice or to solicit office; for in making appointments, as also in regulating his executive course, Washington consulted as he saw fit, and consulted wisely; usually, indeed, in the form of a letter so as to elicit written and thoughtful replies. Whoever might be intimate in the President's household, Washington's tender of office came from the man himself. Three qualifications he believed essential for the highest civil offices: integrity, capacity, and conspicuousness, the last scarcely less than the other two. Unknown characters he did not wish for exalted stations. "I want men," he would say, "already of marked eminence before the country; not only as the more likely to be serviceable, but because the public will more readily trust them." Sectional claims too he did not disregard; for, to his thinking, executive administration, as in the legislative and judiciary departments, required to be largely representative in character, in order to pervade well the whole Union. With these cardinal precepts for his guidance and method, it followed that the office pursued the man more closely during the administration of our first President than as yet under any of his successors; far more, in fact, than would be possible in an age where party councils predominate or the people's candidate has to be worked out by processes less simple than the spontaneous will of the people themselves. Nor, perhaps, has it happened on the other hand that, in so great a proportion of the higher national appointments, men of distinction and diverse views have had the opportunity of declining an office delicately and unexpectedly tendered.

With respect to his official advisers, Washington inclined at first to pursue the strict letter of the constitution, which, conceding it proper to take official

opinions, fetters the Chief Magistrate by no board of executive counsellors. His habit of mind led him to take advice and weigh it, deciding upon his own course of action; and he would consult at discretion the Vice-President, Chief Justice Jay, or a legislative leader like Madison, and not the executive heads alone. Routine matters were referred with military precision to the Secretary concerned. For under the American system as distinguished from the British there is no gently coercive council known as a ministry, and each department is independent of the other, while none of them need bend to the dictation of Congress. But presently consulting his heads of departments and Attorney-General as more immediate advisers, he worked into the convenient practice, after the war between France and England commenced, of assembling them and making oral consultation; whence the origin of what we later term a cabinet and cabinet meetings. Harmony of action and expedition upon affairs of great public moment were reasons doubtless for this latter step; but with the first council of four, selected from such diverse material, dissension and rupture resulted. As Jefferson used to say, he and Hamilton were pitted against each other like two cocks; and Randolph siding more naturally with the one and Knox with the other, the President had often to choose a course of action which half his advisers openly disappproved.

No precisian or martinet, Washington was punctilious in the smallest matters of etiquette. He had precedents to establish as the earliest chief executive, and long intercourse with mankind in exalted station had taught him the importance of rendering to each his due in official intercourse, though it were only by a bow, a smile, or a well-chosen word or two; and this with

him was not diplomacy, but a matter of honor and good breeding. One so reticent by nature must otherwise have constantly offended those who strove to deserve well.

One must admit that the venerating applause at this period of "the man who united all hearts" had a modicum of foolish adulation. The tributes paid him in his day were quite often dictated by bad prosers and worse poets. A college acquaintance with Latin textbooks or a decent familiarity with the graces of Addison and Pope inspired dullards with a desire to ooze out in essays or odes to Columbia and Columbia's favorite son, which appeared in the newspapers. Allegory ran wild, while commonplace metaphors and tropes, like the fife and drum airs, graced every holiday. Upon its first recurrence after the inauguration, Washington's birthday was celebrated in leading towns with public marks of honor; a custom the Cincinnati of New York helped institute and which has never since fallen into disuse, though to no other American's lot has fallen such continuous distinction. Birthday and procession odes became accordingly the favorite doggerel of the day, many of them having that smack of Tate and Brady which bespoke a psalm-singing age. One song began:

"Arrayed in glory bright
Columbia's saviour comes."

Another proceeded in like strain:

"His glory shines beyond the skies,
From Heaven proceeds."

With stanzas like these set to appropriate music, a choir would stand before the President when he appeared upon a public tour, and launch the loud pæan at a face which relaxed nothing of its habitual expression of calm serenity.

This was an age over which the royal atmosphere still hung, though Washington was praised as one whose career put kings and tyrants to the blush. Such ascriptions were heard as, "Long live George Washington!" or "God bless your reign!" Religious, municipal, and social bodies preferred continually their addresses of congratulation for a gracious acknowledgment. All were obsequious. Indeed, the plain words with which the Quaker selectman of Salem welcomed the President to that town contrasted very strongly with the other speeches made upon his Eastern tour.* Washington's reverence for religion furthermore stimulated unduly the narration of apocryphal anecdotes for the benefit of the young. The administration press moreover inclined to servile flattery; and though it were only his "black Sam's" advertisement for provisions to supply the Presidential table, the disposition was irresistible to tack a moral like that of Æsop's fables upon everything that Washington did or indirectly sanctioned.

Much of this extravagance Washington permitted from real appreciation of a sincere personal devotion, however awkwardly expressed, but far more because he could not possibly avoid it. To every breath of

* There was much merriment in the public prints over the simple eloquence of this Mr. Northey, though it evidently touched the right chord: "Friend Washington, we are glad to see thee, and in behalf of the inhabitants bid thee a hearty welcome to Salem." See Boston Centinel, November 7, 1789.

blame he was so keenly sensitive that he sought privately to justify himself to friends who censured these stately honors; hinting at what was doubtless true, that he often parried the efforts of others to make them statelier still. But beyond this we must accept Washington as a representative man of his times, not free from the prevalent notions of official dignity, nor given to theorizing upon the ideal government where all are rulers; as a man, moreover, who estimated justly his own historical position and the immeasurable services he had rendered to the Union of these States. An American to the core, a sincere patriot, believing in the future grandeur of the republic, the only reward from his fellow-countrymen to which he attached any personal value whatever was their gratitude, and upon this he would throw himself to enjoy its buoying influence like a bold swimmer who dashes into the sea. Apparently the love of approbation grew upon him with years; but through life he was too well balanced in temperament to crave it inordinately and too self-respecting to court it.

Those who view Washington through the refracting medium of his own age are apt either to exaggerate or belittle his character, according to their susceptibleness. To a generation of image-breakers heedless of moral restraints, the sceptical disposition must be to take such a character to pieces and reconstruct from the fragments, if possible, a man with as little real reverence as one of themselves, and a hypocrite besides. No such reconstruction is possible here while truth remains a jewel; for Washington was as genuine a man as ever came from his Maker's hand. His whole life is an open book to his countrymen, wherein the acts and pursuits of his mature years are very fully recorded.

Constantly in contact with the public for twenty-five years, seen by natives and foreigners, the memorable incidents of his life during this period are preserved as well as his private impressions. His letters have been explored and even spurious ones imputed to him. It is strangely significant that military and political rivals who plotted against him unsuccessfully, those who fought with him and those he conquered, have left on record one and the same tribute to his greatness of soul. With possibly the exception of downright John Adams, whose ardent but jealous ambition was vexed at having to encounter for his superior the silent soldier he had brought forward in '75 to command the army, no great contemporary who survived Washington ever upon a final retrospect detracted from his fame. On the contrary, Jefferson, who had a keen eye for faults, and who, of all Washington's intimates, borrowed least from his lustre, has left one of the most graceful and doubtless one of the most discriminating of tributes to his memory ever penned. Out from these clouds of incense which gather now and then to obscure our vision emerges always the same Washington, lofty, symmetrical, eternal, like a mountain peak which is seen piercing the morning mists.

Let us take, if we can, the proportions of this noble character as it stands out nakedly against a clear sky. We are not in the first place to ascribe to Washington intellectual endowments of the highest order. In quickness, fertility of resources, and freshness of thought, he was surpassed by two certainly of his first cabinet advisers and the Vice-President besides. Nor was he a scholar, a well-read man, so much as one of a methodical turn and observant mind, whose travel and personal experience with men and affairs rendered

him the best interpreter of the America of his times. The organizing faculty, which in him was splendidly developed, and thoroughly systematic habits aided a retentive mind of large natural powers; adding to which a patient, conscientious, sleepless devotion to whatever undertaking was in hand, and an unfailing patriotism, we have a man who was born to execute, to humble his king, to make and keep America free.

But Washington's best mental gift was a sound and discriminating judgment. The balance of his mental and moral powers was truly superb. Neither passion nor interest could blind him when it came to deliberating between men or methods. He first sought the best advice he could gain from various sources, next he weighed it well, and finally, after making his choice, adhered consistently to both course and conclusion. Free, however, from that pride of origination which keeps so many great intellects obstinate beyond the conviction of error, he took his bearings anew as prudence might dictate, and with a steady hand on the helm watched constantly the horizon. He was thus in civil affairs a splendid practical administrator, though necessarily conservative, and a thorn to party leaders; not infallible, yet never far astray as concerned present action. As a military leader there was danger that one so deliberative might on some unexpected turn be disconcerted by the foe and outgeneralled, and so it had happened more than once; but for a protracted campaign he stood well the test, and where he advanced and had prepared the surprise he came out conqueror.

Washington's moral and religious traits of character have been constantly eulogized. That he was a true Christian cannot be doubted, but what most strikingly impresses is that he was a Christian who lived by rule

rather than impulse. The practice was by no means uncommon for persons in his day to frame a series of maxims which should regulate their daily behavior, and secrete them in some private place; but those which Washington is known to have prepared for himself, or at least made use of, were neither obtrusively pious on the one hand, nor on the other framed after that common Chesterfield pattern which would catalogue smirks and bows among the virtues; they were sober, temperate, just, and manly. That same reflective disposition which Washington displayed in public affairs pervaded his whole inner life. His self-examination in lonely hours must have been scrutinizing and severe.

Washington most probably had personal ambition. His career indicates this, and particularly the wealthy marriage which greatly promoted his advancement. But his ambition was always of that elevated kind which makes one the willing instrument for accomplishing beneficent ends. And here the rare temperance of Washington, the just equilibrium to maintain which was a life-long duty, stood him in good stead, for he remained a steadfast patriot when tempted to make himself a monarch. Never violent or vindictive in action, he stands that rarest of the world's military heroes—lord of himself. Yet Washington was not free from the common infirmities, but on the contrary a man of naturally fierce passions; and there were moments of provocation, even in this tranquil autumn of his life, when he would give way to a violent outburst of language such as made listeners cower and tremble. But his wrath was soon spent; he quickly recovered himself; and when it came to the decision justice inflexible had regained her seat.

It may well excite surprise that one in outer life so unemotional, so reserved of manner, so cold almost to haughtiness, should in a republic have inspired so much popular enthusiasm as unquestionably did this man. Americans of our times catch his radiance like that of some incandescent light which shines without emitting heat; but the Americans of a century ago were perhaps more susceptible to heroic impressions, and regarded birth and high-breeding differently. And in every age of a republic, military courage calls forth the common admiration, and so, too, does sincerity of purpose. Two courses lie open to popular preferment: one by exhibiting captivating manners and a desire to conciliate every one; the other by performing well the task that lies nearest home and leaving the multitude to gain a better acquaintance. The former is preferred by small men who seek official lustre from small occasions, but the few truly great and well-deserving who have gained distinction when great occasion has discovered and tested them, sink deepest in the popular heart after they once enter; they are the stronger for their self-poise, and praised for that which places them in contrast with other men and stands opposed to the contemptible. Washington, if not cordial, lively, or sociable, was at all events courteous, considerate, and just in his dealings. That desolation of greatness, which so distinguishes him above other Americans, forbade favoritism, so that those under him became emulous of promotion by merit.

Socially speaking, it can hardly be said that Washington had a private life. He cherished no bosom friends, though interesting himself in young people; and among leading men of his day those who won his heart the closest were Hamilton and the impulsive

Lafayette. Yet he had no convivial Bentinck like William of Orange, whom in many points he resembled; and probably no person living partook freely of his confidence. He married when past the season of impetuous youth; he had no child of his own, but to the offspring of his wife by her former marriage he was like an own parent, though in domestic life he was constant rather than demonstrative. Close as were his official relations with other public men, he repelled familiarity; and when one by no means unconspicuous * came up and saluted him in a jocular manner with a slap on the shoulder, Washington turned upon him with a look that withered him into silence. But carefully as he exacted the respect which he felt others owed him, he was equally scrupulous in rendering to each his due in return. The just balance was the principle he applied to all actions, public or private, high or low, to hospitality, to deeds of charity, and to the economies alike of a nation or his own household.

It appears certain that Washington had neither wit nor a salient humor. He conversed sensibly and well with the guest at table, but a witty sally disturbed him, and to anything like the thrust of ridicule he was keenly sensitive. No *bon mot* is known to have escaped his lips. Young ladies pleased him with their vivacity, and in one or two burlesque scenes on his plantation, which cannot be funnily described, he astonished the household by breaking out into a long and hearty laugh. Otherwise his face, unless he was angry, wore that calm and placid expression of repose with which his pictures make us so familiar. And yet a dry, almost

* G. Morris. See Van Buren's Political Parties, p. 106, where this is narrated as an incident of the Philadelphia Convention of 1787.

sardonic sense of humor peeps out of his correspondence in by-places, of a quality still better illustrated perhaps by the authenticated instance where he turned sharply upon a little boy who was running after him from his tailor's admiringly through a retired street of Philadelphia, and taking off his hat made him a profound salutation.* For unless the ludicrous aspect of the curiosity he everywhere excited sometimes amused the great man he cannot have been human.

Washington's peculiar temperament and habits are largely explained by reference to his training and personal experience. Born of a good Virginian family, he was left fatherless at an early age, with the cares of a large household, only moderately provided for, devolving much upon him as the most trusted son of a widowed mother. His education was received at home under her refining influence. By profession a surveyor, before reaching majority his duties took him into unsettled regions on long expeditions, remote from congenial society; then serving under Braddock, his military experience began among the frontier Indians. An early love disappointment saddened a heart whose hidden depths must have been stirred profoundly. Becoming an independent and wealthy planter, rising to social eminence, the Revolution called him forth to take the lead of the American armies, in which post he continued through his prime, issuing orders and maturing plans which required long deliberation and the utmost secrecy. And thus had a shy, meditative, proud-spirited youth grown into a serious, reticent, well-balanced man, whose chief relaxation consisted in being publicly entertained and publicly entertaining.

Long use of the pen and contact with the best think-

* See Isaac T. Hopper's Recollections.

ers in America trained Washington into a ready writer, capable of expressing himself in a clear, terse, and impressive style, imperfect as had been his education. But he had no pride of authorship, and with the incessant official demands made upon him for civil and military papers, he had long since fallen into the course of permitting others to draft documents for his signature. Yet in the component of those voluminous writings which pass current as his own, whatever pure gold others may have supplied, the test and the stamp of the coinage is his.

Of Washington's physical courage there can be no shadow of a doubt; he gave orders calmly while bullets whizzed about him; he was every inch a soldier. But his moral courage is not to be appreciated without considering that he protected his military honor in an age of duels without ever sending or provoking a challenge. An open enemy quailed before his eye and the cold, rebuking dignity into which he froze when offended, while treacherous friends were most often disarmed by his genuine magnanimity.

On the whole it is the predominance of the moral over the mental and physical qualities, or rather their admirable union, that most impresses us. For strategic skill, consummate policy, profoundness of views, or even originality, Washington is not pre-eminent among the world's heroes, although, as one has well remarked, so far as he could see, he saw more clearly than any other man of his times. But as the man of safe action, as the fittest creation of a revolutionary age, as the embodiment of whatever was grandest in a grand cause, as the filial Æneas who bore America on his shoulders from darkness to light, his name is imperishable.

Early in February, 1789, memorials were presented in the House of Representatives favoring emancipation: first from the Quakers of the Middle States; next from the Abolition Society of Pennsylvania, Franklin's name heading the latter. "Equal liberty," claimed the abolition petition, "was originally the portion and is still the birthright of all men." And its prayer to Congress was, "That you will promote mercy and justice towards this distressed race; and that you will step to the very verge of the power vested in you for discouraging every species of traffic in the persons of our fellow-men."

Franklin died a few weeks after Congress had disposed of the memorial which bore his illustrious signature, and in two continents were bestowed upon a private citizen and man of the people funeral honors which kings might have envied. In this last public act of his life, the only one in fact which associates his name closely with America's new epoch, the veteran patriot, whom some House debaters supposed to be in his dotage, proved himself as clear-sighted as ever,—a statesman, sagacious and philanthropic in advance of his times.

1790. April 17.

As to official intercourse between Congress and the Executive, the course first fixed upon was not regularly continued afterwards. Washington delivered his annual messages orally in the presence of the two Houses, as did his immediate successor, formal responses following after the manner already alluded to. With that over-eagerness to magnify their special importance by establishing close and mysterious relations with the Chief Magistrate, which Senators were seen to have

displayed at the first assembling of Congress, a minority of that body attempted to procure the President's personal attendance for making his nominations, which was to be followed by a ballot taken in his presence. But this was not approved by the general voice of the Senate; and Washington himself, who, at the first session, would sometimes consult the Senate in person, and more frequently sent the head of a department to make explanation of official matters requiring the action of that branch, utterly discontinued the practice upon reflection, substituting the rule that all executive communications to either house, except the opening message, should be in writing. This latter course better preserved the dignity and independence of the Executive; for, whatever the public advantage in requiring ministers of state to attend open deliberations of the legislature and make such exposition of the administration plans as to fix the public attention and induce suitable action, there can be none whatever in their secret affiliation with a branch which sits with closed doors and can but partially accomplish the executive wishes. The confirmation of all treaties and appointments vested, however, in the senatorial discretion, and, notwithstanding executive communications were now made in writing, the President would still ask the advice and consent of the Senate in forming an Indian treaty.

1791. The political opponents of the Hamilton Federalists had now begun to assume the regular style of "Republicans." To Federalists, however, who prided themselves upon their old party name, it seemed rather a Southern faction, "outs," who were

jealous of the "ins," the old dregs and fæces of Anti-Federalism once more in ferment. On their own part, the present fealty of Federalist leaders was not so much to the constitution, in which all classes of citizens now fairly acquiesced, as to the broad construction of constitutional powers, and to the funding, the bank, and other great features of the Hamilton system of finance. Hamilton himself originated the ideas which they supported. Voters will cling long to party names and traditions and to party favorites, under any circumstances; and, with Washington at the head, patriots, irrespective of party, were well satisfied. The common people had not as yet learned to use their strength; and Ames put the patrician idea modestly enough when he asserted that "the men of sense and property, even a little above the multitude, wish to keep the government in force enough to govern." As against Virginia and North Carolina, the States where these opposition elements were becoming most active, and whose legislatures had recently led off in attempting, among other popular measures, to force open the doors of the United States Senate, the Federal leaders, strongly dominant in New England, hoped to win by keeping New York and the Middle States in alliance on their own side.

While conservatives, aristocrats, the commercial class, the timorous, and the friends of a powerful central rule thus gravitated towards Hamilton as their natural leader and exponent, the liberty-loving, those jealous of class supremacy and court manners, they who detested money-changers and the new methods of growing rich, together with the floating remnants of the Anti-Federal and State rights party, were irresistibly attracted towards Jefferson, whose superior talents and social eminence made his devotion to their cause

appear all the more captivating. Probably no two men holding subordinate station under an American President can ever again so strongly influence powerful parties by their personal example as did Hamilton and Jefferson in this and the succeeding years. Nor was their present influence owing so much to their rival ambitions as to the genuine devotedness of each to the politics and political methods he professed.

CHAPTER III.

SECOND ADMINISTRATION OF GEORGE WASHINGTON.

§ I. Period of Third Congress. March 4, 1793-March 3, 1795.—§ II. Period of Fourth Congress. March 4, 1795-March 3, 1797.

A HANDBOOK, prepared in 1793 at the Treasury Department, gives a succinct view of the condition of the United States at that date, and sets forth the prospective advantages afforded to families seeking a new home in America. By Thomas Cooper, too, an Englishman of liberal tendencies, the same flattering picture of American life is also presented as the result of his own personal tour of inspection. A land of liberty was here pictured, where public credit stood firmly, where the taxes were light, and where a happy mediocrity of fortune prevailed, instead of those depressing contrasts of wealth and poverty with which Europe was sadly familiar.

Land and landed products were the great source of our national wealth, as thus exhibited. Yet here was a considerable commerce, in addition, encouraged by drawbacks and the absence of all export duties. Manufactures had been steadily growing since 1789. These consisted still of articles of necessity rather than the products of elegance and refinement.

But, most of all, the United States was a nation of farmers and planters, gaining a livelihood from the soil; and, with land cheap, the cost of labor high, and room for all, the European welcomed the prospect of gain-

ing an honest livelihood in a country where all were equals, and a man could marry and rear a family without the depressing thought that for each new mouth to be fed his scanty crust must be broken into smaller fragments. To the down-trodden of the Old World such a prospect was most inspiriting, and the hope, too, of owning the fee of his own farm, instead of having to rent the land from a peer or a peer's tenant, and so devote the chief fruits of the earth to pampering others in idleness.

To the foreigner seeking to become a farmer and freeman in the New World, the Middle section of the United States offered at this time the greatest inducements. New England appeared a sterile region, and the soil was here so parcelled out among a large and thrifty people that the price of lands was high; her own sons had begun to roam westward for these very reasons. From the Southern States one was kept because of a climate unfavorable to toil and still more unfavorable institutions. The far West, as yet, was for those only who were willing to endure the greatest hardship and social privations; and such had become the dread of Indian massacre since our late military disasters that the pioneer slept with his loaded rifle by his side, and started at the screech-owl's call as though he heard the yell of approaching savages. To Central New York one might turn with favor, in whose happy valleys the strange mixture of white and red inhabitants was symbolized by a corresponding fusion of geographical names—where the modern Rome and Utica, Syracuse and happy Palmyra were gradually becoming founded along the Mohawk and in the Oneida and Ontario country. Hither had the New England emigrants resorted in large numbers of late.

But rapidly as New York grew, Pennsylvania seemed, to the emigrant farmer, the garden State of America. Of peasant emigration to the United States the greater part was drained at this time from Ireland and Germany. And it was quite customary at this period for such of the humbler emigrants, Germans more particularly, as could not pay their passage, to make agreement with the captain for selling their services for a suitable term to such Americans as might be willing to give them employment on their arrival and advance the cost of transportation. These "redemptioners," as they were called, performed much menial service in Philadelphia, and it frequently happened that the expense of needful clothing and supplies, furnished by the employer, would cause the term of one's contract bondage to be considerably prolonged.

Once free to choose his own plans of life, and blessed with spare cash, the foreign emigrant, like the native pioneer who sought to become an independent tiller of the soil, looked about for a suitable spot to cultivate. The land capitalists and their agents approached him, of course, with offers of sale, more or less tempting, as to the tracts they wished to get rid of. Nor by 1797 was it certain that a capable and industrious farmer might not get thousands of acres in the back country at a nominal cost, provided he would settle and draw a colony about him; for that was the time when the load of wild lands was a millstone upon many a speculator's shoulders, and Morris, whose indorsement had once sustained the sinking credit of the Union, got lodged in a debtor's prison. A discreet settler took care that his soil was fertile and the land sufficiently near to a good market; if there was a continuous water connection with some prosperous port, all the better.

Hickory and walnut were the signs of rich land; that which bore firs he avoided, if possible, as barren and unproductive. Farms in the new country rarely exceeded three hundred acres; one hundred and fifty was a very fair average.

After buying his land and taking possession in the spring of the year, the farmer would cut down a few trees to build him and his family a temporary home. His neighbors, if there were any for miles about, good-naturedly lent their assistance, and in three or four days a building of unhewn logs rose ready for habitation. Roughly put together, the interstices stopped with rails, calked with straw or moss and daubed with mud, and the roof covered with nothing better than thin staves split out of oak or ash and fastened on by heavy poles, such a dwelling was a "log cabin;" but a house of a better sort, especially if made of hewn logs, having the crannies neatly stopped with stones and plaster, and a shingled roof, would be styled a "log house." An American log house, with glass windows and a chimney, was quite as comfortable as the better cottages of English farmers; and on its stoop, some bright afternoon, might be seen a healthy woman awaiting her husband's return, and dressed to please him, who dandled a babe in her arms, while handsome boys and girls played before her or clung timidly to her calico gown. Log cabins, too, were often the abode of a modest refinement, though commonly made far from convenient, for they were usually without windows and had only a hole at the top for the smoke to escape through.

An American forest stood grand in the mass, the tall trees interlocking their branches, with many a pictu-

resque scene at the clearings. But, as compared with English woods, their trunks did not seem thick and mossy, nor their foliage so dense and rich. This made the backwoodsman's work the lighter, however, and the ring of his axe was the bugle of civilization's advancing host. Grubbing the land he meant to cultivate, by removing all the small trees and undergrowth, of which he made bonfires on the spot, he next proceeded to cut down as many trees of the larger sort nearest his building as seemed suitable, girdling others, without delay, so as to destroy the vegetation of the branches, and let in the light and air to his next season's crop.

Turning his new soil in May with a ploughshare or harrow, the settler dropped Indian corn into the earth, and was gladdened by a large harvest in October. A wholesome store of cornmeal and hominy was thus laid by for the family consumption, with abundant provender besides for cattle and poultry. His sheep and hogs, if he had any, ranged the forest for their food.

Once a freeholder the pioneer stood firmly, granting industrious habits and a stock of good health. For a few years, indeed, it was a lonely and rough life, with little social comfort or relaxation beyond what the secluded family might find in one another. The father and his oldest sons must roam the woods, with dog and gun, to shoot deer, raccoons, and squirrels for fresh meat, whose skins they bartered with the nearest store or trading-house in order to procure clothing, tea, and sugar for the household; or, on a cloudy afternoon, they dropped hook and line in the lake or along the nearest stream to secure the next morning's breakfast. But as years go on the land becomes cleared, a few more

acres each season. One begins raising wheat, tobacco, or other crops, which should yield him a pecuniary return; the kitchen garden and orchards are seen; the increase of his live stock adds to his wealth and comfort, and, still more, the growth of a blooming family of sons and daughters, for whose future he feels no anxiety. Neighbors approach more closely. A sawmill and competent builders appear, and at length he moves from the log house into his more pretentious and permanent dwelling of boards. Perhaps the township grows so rapidly that, ere he has passed his prime, he becomes a trader, a social leader, a patriarch, or, haply, a politician. His girls grow up like wild roses. His boys, with the usual allowances for black sheep, elbow their way through the world; and upon some yet uncultivated portion of his tract he may fence off the married son, whose taste is not for roaming, and tell the young couple they must coax their fortune from mother nature as he has done.

If, however, the pioneer fail of success (and ill-success in life, wherever and whatever the pursuit, is often traceable to family traits, such as despondency, impatience, or too romantic a disposition), he soon quits the spot first purchased and is off with his family for other acres seven or eight hundred miles away, there to try his fortunes anew, with the odds more against him at each change. If idle or dissipated in habits, he degenerates into a demi-savage; his scanty clearing ill supports the wife and children huddled into the chinky hut, and they must sow and reap for themselves or perish, while he wanders the forest for days, with no company but his hound, his rifle, and the fatal flask. Society grows hateful and burdensome to him, and his earthly curse is still to wander and to wander, leaping

before each advancing wave of population which washes inward from the Atlantic coast.

Philadelphia, which, as the first city in historic renown, the first in population, and the temporary national abode, wore the triple crown of the United States, fulfilled her mission with a Quaker-like simplicity and quiet which somewhat diminished the example she was setting. Philanthropic and learned societies here existed, commerce flourished, colleges and hospitals stood on old endowments, and yet an atmosphere of serenity, not to say of dulness, enveloped the public work of the place. A want of homogeneousness in the population, and religious differences dating back to Colonial days, made an obstacle here, as in the rest of the State, to united enterprise and the development of a distinctive political character. Philadelphians had no such typical traits or typical leaders as Boston or Charleston; there were sets and cliques all living apart, and the social striatures here yawned the wider, because, as a municipality, it was broken into fragments. The city had few pretentious edifices at this time, and those were private ones; and of the grandest of these the owner melted his fortune as he constructed it.

Philadelphia was, in short, quite typical of its dwellers, a city of plain, sober, substantial homes, whose wealthy merchants, out of good brick, with white marble facings and foundations, made themselves dwellings, with ample dormers and doorways, easy staircases, and open chimneys, comfortable, but severely chaste. On warm summer evenings their living contents, like a Front Street merchant's bales and boxes, would pour out, upon the clean steps, porches, and side-

walks, but wooden shutters at most other times excluded the public gaze as from the riches of a safe-vault. The gregarious desire was usually kept within decorous bounds, and, as scarcely a mechanic could live contented here without being a freeholder, the poor man's desire was often gratified by the purchase of a vacant lot in some new street, where he might put up a small building fifty feet back from the surveyor's line, there to live until his means should enable him to join a good house to the front and turn his first habitation into a kitchen ell. The streets had no curbstones as yet, but pavements were dotted by posts to mark the boundaries. Though a Schuylkill aqueduct was lately projected, pumps supplied water for drinking, and rain-casks whatever might be needful for washing the clothes. Spring Garden was a favorite place for flying kites; State House Square, with its beautiful elms, the fashionable promenade. The old jail and whipping-post exchanged knowing glances at the corner of Third and High streets. Philadelphia's system of streets, running at right angles, made the city a safe one to find one's way in. Trees were set out at regular intervals, and the nightly chorus of toads and bullfrogs, broken, possibly, by the plaintive note of a whip-poor-will, reminded every Londoner that he was far from home. For miles from the city, on the Pennsylvania side, there was an open prospect, since the king's troops, at the period of occupation, had, when distressed for fuel, cut down many hundred acres of orchards; but the opposite shore of New Jersey was a forest.

At this period epidemic disorders were prevalent in northern sea-coast towns to an extent unknown in the nineteenth century under our modern system of sanitary precautions and the advance of medical science.

Small-pox broke out in Boston with such virulence in the latter part of 1792 that a town meeting was called to devise measures for checking the contagion, and Governor Hancock thought it prudent to convene the next legislature at Concord. A scourge far more terrible and less skilfully resisted afflicted Philadelphia a year later; a strange and fatal disease, proving to be the yellow fever, which was probably brought over in early summer by some uninspected vessel from the West Indies. At a lodging-house on Water Street, in July, the first victims were attacked, and from this quarter of the city the contagion spread regularly along, checked by an occasional empty block of houses, until in the latter part of August the whole population was in a panic. Mayor Clarkson, on the 22d of August, ordered the streets cleaned and filth removed, and by the 26th an address of the Philadelphia physicians was published, warning the citizens against the danger of holding intercourse with infected persons. The tolling of bells at funerals was stopped, and all were advised to avoid fatigue, dress warmly, and preserve habits of temperance. But medical men understood little how to cope with this terrible disorder. Stopping the practice of kindling bonfires, which some had hitherto thought a good preventive of the disease, they substituted that of firing guns for clearing the air; under the delusion apparently that the smell of gunpowder was beneficial, but without sufficiently reflecting that this jarring of people's nerves prostrated them the more readily. So, too, it was only after fatal experiments with salt purges, bark, wine, and laudanum, that Dr. Rush found, as he declared, in calomel and jalap a happy remedy; and thereupon so instant became the demand for these new specifics, that many

fell victims to doses of the dangerous components not properly apportioned. Vinegar and camphor, and pieces of tarred rope were widely used and recommended by way of preventives.

The usual course of the disease was this: Chilly fits first warned one of his danger, next a hot skin; he felt pains all over the back, and became costive; he had soreness at the stomach, accompanied by violent retchings without any discharge. If these symptoms slowly abated he recovered, but if they suddenly ceased it was a sign of danger. In the latter event the whites of the eyes would become saffron-colored, blood issued from the mouth and nose, and vomiting ensued of a dark substance resembling coffee-grounds. The victim's skin now assumed in spots that yellowish-purple from which the name of the fever was derived. He felt sleepy, and would lie down wherever he happened to be; delirium seized him soon after, and sometimes within a few hours after the first attack, though more commonly in the course of from five to eight days, he died. Even where he recovered from the black vomit spell there was danger that a fatal hæmorrhage would set in. The disease was most successfully combated by breaking up the first costiveness. One in good health would catch the infection from the breath or the touch of a tainted person; and even a trunk of clothing was known to communicate the disorder.

About August 25 the inhabitants began to flee as from death on the pale horse. Coaches, carriages, and drays, in long processions, bore human beings, with their baggage and household goods, to a prudent distance from the city of pestilence. Those who remained in Philadelphia shut themselves up in their houses, ven-

turing out as little as possible, and friends passed one another with only a cold look of recognition; easy conversation at the street corner was suspended, for each distrusted his neighbor. While the epidemic lasted 17,000 left town. An approaching hearse was the signal for closing every door and window, and all who wore the habiliments of mourning, even heart-broken orphans and widows, were shunned as though branded murderers. The suffering was intensified among the poor and bereaved by reason of the utter stagnation of business, whereby thousands were thrown out of employment. Meantime the undertaker, the busiest of men, with his energies taxed to the utmost, did most of the doleful business of interment by night, and, contracting to furnish coffins by the quantity in his wholesale procedure, that which he designed for one member of a family would serve not unfrequently for another, while the intended occupant recovered. The remains of respected citizens, in this period of gloom, no matter what the cause of death, were hurried to the grave on a pair of shafts, drawn by a single horse, with some solitary negro for the driver; they were buried without funeral rites, not a member of the family nor a family friend being present to drop a last tear at the grave. It was not strange if amid all this confusion mistakes occurred, or that a sick man was sometimes boxed up before the breath had left his body. The public offices were temporarily removed from the mourning city. The General Assembly of Pennsylvania met at the State House in the midst of the panic, and then hastily adjourned. Officials, even the municipal ones whose duty it was to provide for averting this contagion, slipped away under various pretexts, shifting upon

those who remained a tremendous burden, without means adequate for sustaining it. The almshouse having been closed upon infected occupants, a vacant circus on Market Street was taken by the authorities, where victims died of sheer exposure to the damp air, and one corpse actually putrefied before a servant,—and she a female, who fortunately suffered nothing in consequence,—could be found hardy enough to remove it; the neighbors meantime threatening to set the building on fire unless the hospital quarters were removed speedily to a more distant site.

While the fear of approaching death laid bare the selfishness and meanness of the many, it showed that there were brave citizens who dared to expose their own lives in order to assuage the general suffering. One of these was Mayor Clarkson, whose conduct adorns with cisatlantic lustre a name which philanthropy must ever claim for her own; another, Stephen Girard, Philadelphia's renowned benefactor of later years, who, with Peter Helm, assumed in September the direction of the new Lazaretto Hospital at Bush Hill, an institution which, filthily kept and poorly served, had previously acquired the repute of a human slaughter-house. Meetings of patriotic citizens, presided over by the mayor, provided temporary funds, and moneyed men seconded the efforts made by their more prominent brethren for organizing resistance to the dread destroyer.

Nature proved the only skilful physician for her own distemper in this case. With the first frosts of early November the yellow fever ceased, and the city once more became inhabited and habitable. During the season of the epidemic, from August to November 9, the number of city interments was 4,044, and it is esti-

mated that out of the entire population which inhabited Philadelphia while the fever prevailed, more than 20 per cent. perished.

From the time of Washington's second inauguration, or, perhaps, from the opening of the same calendar year, dates the development of a new impulse to political divisions in America. The party cleavage was essentially as before, but, instead of Hamilton's financial policy, the predominant issue now became, through the influence of gathering events, that predilection already strong as between the two great contending powers of Europe, Great Britain and France, which was before subordinated. Those countries, grappling as in a death-struggle, sought to embroil the United States, each on her own side, by exerting a direct influence upon the policy which our American people claimed so nearly as their own constitutional right to control. Nor can it be said with truth that a genuine neutrality, with reference to European politics, prevailed in this country from 1793 until after the war of 1812, a war which accomplished the final divorcement of the two continents.

Before the recall of Genet had been determined upon, Washington held in his hands the proffered resignations of his two chief secretaries. His peace of mind, and the harmony of the administration councils, required that one or both should be promptly accepted. Jefferson had proposed resigning in September, but the President induced him to remain until the end of the year, when Congress would be assembled. It was Hamilton's wish, however, that his own retirement should take effect not sooner than the close of the com-

ing session; his department plans were to be brought forward in Congress, and he wished an opportunity for resuming that investigation into his official conduct which neither he nor the President thought concluded.

No rational interpretation of our new treaty with Great Britain can leave a doubt in candid minds that this government, having plain grievances against King George, yielded all the favors in her power to bestow for the sake of getting these grievances redressed for the first time, and only just far enough to obviate the necessity of immediate war. Jay, the representative of the aggrieved country, though honorable and patriotic, had always been a timid negotiator on America's behalf, and on this mission he was so painfully conscious that a dangerous contest of arms would follow his failure to make terms with the aggressor, that he most likely encouraged the less scrupulous statesman who treated with him, to turn the opportunity to England's best account, by obtaining all the commercial advantages for the European struggle she wished for without undergoing the humiliation of asking for them; and paring the claws of a neutral who had angrily threatened to use them, while persuading America that the British lion was submitting to that operation. While it is probable that Jay could not have gained more for his country, it is certain he might have surrendered less, and so given an equally pacific exit to his mission.

1795. June-July.

The secret of the Jay treaty had been profoundly kept by all admitted into it, even beyond the adjournment of the Senate. But outside curiosity was intense; nor can it be thought strange, so strong was the sense

of injustice on our part, if a too sanguine public expectation framed an imaginary treaty, which yielded all the commercial rights America had asked for, and made ample reparation for every injury. Washington, impressed with the importance of preventing a war, which the rejection of these negotiations rendered likely, had intended to ratify the treaty apparently, should the Senate so advise, but he was now embarrassed by its reservation of the West India clause, which raised some technical questions concerning the constitutional "advice and consent" required of that body. And a second perplexity had arisen, far more serious; for during the Senate session came intelligence from abroad that, profiting by the present scarcity of provisions in France, whither nearly all our last year's grain harvest was destined, the British ministry had renewed their former offensive order for seizing provision vessels, so that immediate ratification on his part might be interpreted into a virtual surrender of the American view held, not without strong support from international jurists, on a delicate issue which the treaty itself had not assumed to decide. Incorrect and imperfect versions of the English negotiation had recently appeared in our newspapers, and just as Washington was on the point of allowing to the public an inspection of the authentic document, Bache's paper came out with a true copy of the treaty in full.

The news swept the country like wildfire. Republished in all the other leading newspapers of the Union, the treaty made a profound popular impression, and that mostly of disappointment and disfavor. A town meeting in Boston, in July, which some of the most eminent merchants of the place attended, denounced the treaty as unworthy of ratification, and agreed to

memorialize the President to that effect. In New York a mass gathering was next called for a similar purpose, which Hamilton and his friends tried unwisely to capture in the Anglican interest. Hamilton was stoned while speaking in aid of the treaty, and after his sympathizers had been compelled to withdraw, resolutions of opposition, under the lead of the Livingston family, were unanimously passed. Public meetings followed at Philadelphia and Charleston with the like object of remonstrance, McKean, Muhlenberg, and Dallas taking a prominent part in the former, and John Rutledge and Gadsden in the latter. Most of these demonstrations had riotous accompaniments, such as burning the treaty before the British minister's house, trailing the British flag, and destroying Jay in effigy.

Amid the general execration, Jay suffered the popular penalty, usual with American statesmen on such occasions, of having his motives foully traduced. At Philadelphia a transparency was borne in procession, with a figure of the Chief Justice in his long robe; his right hand held a balance, one scale of which, inscribed "American liberty and independence" kicked the beam, while "British gold" bore down the other. His left hand extended the treaty scroll towards a group of Senators. From his mouth proceeded the words, "Come up to my price, and I will sell you my country." This effigy was burned at Kensington.

While the fate of this nation to so many hung apparently by the same thread with the treaty,

1796. April.

Fisher Ames rose to his feet to deliver the most eloquent speech ever heard in Congress by his generation. Failing health had kept one of the most

experienced debaters of the House from mingling hitherto in the discussion; a misfortune which was felt all the more keenly as Tracy, who had been put forward to respond to the calm and reassuring speech of Gallatin, showed too much asperity to make a strong counter-impression, and marred the effect of his argument by ill-natured flings at Gallatin's foreign nativity. Ames, against his physician's advice, determined to speak, and the galleries filled to hear him. He arose pale and feeble, hardly able to stand, but soon warmed with the subject and the opportunity. Touching with delicacy upon French excesses and the first commotion which the treaty had excited, the movements of passion, which are quicker than those of the understanding, deprecating all foreign partisanship, and making no attempt to vaunt unduly the merits of the treaty as other Federalists had done, he pressed home with earnestness and force the strongest points in favor of passing the present appropriation. These points were, the inconsistency of letting negotiation operate a full treaty ratified in every particular, and then claiming the right to defeat its execution afterwards; the wound to the public honor of this nation should the public faith be violated; the certainty of both foreign war and anarchy, as he viewed it, if the proposed treaty should fail in this manner. It was in depicting the horrors which, to his mind, depressed under the influence of a deep-seated malady, were sure to follow so dangerous a course, that Ames's eloquence took its loftiest flight, moving his hearers to tears. He pictured the new frontier war which would be provoked by Britain's continued retention of the posts—the blaze of the log houses, the war-whoop of the Indians, the bound victims, all the terrors of 1794 repeated. Beckoning to

his hearers like the spectre of some disembodied hero who awaits the cock-crow before returning to the shades of an invisible world, Ames held his long familiar associates spellbound by a vivid imagery of these dreadful scenes and a pathos of expression worthy of Jonathan Edwards. "Even the minutes I have spent in expostulation," were his closing solemn words, "have their value, because they protract the crisis and the short period in which alone we may resolve to escape it. Yet I have, perhaps, as little personal interest in the event as any one here. There is, I believe, no member who will not think his chance to be a witness of the consequences greater than mine. If, however, the vote should pass to reject, and a spirit should rise, as it will, with the public disorders to make confusion worse confounded, even I, slender and almost broken as my hold on life is, may outlive the government and constitution of my country."

This speech, whose pathetic utterances were wrung from a suffering heart, carried the day, not without compassion for the sufferer, for it was blind Milton reciting "Paradise Lost." There was scarcely a dry eye in the House. Judge Iredell and the Vice-President sat sobbing in the gallery together, and ejaculating: "My God! how great he is!" "Noble!" An adjournment was carried; but Ames's speech was unanswered, its impression lasted, and the vote taken the next day stood 49 to 49 on the question of appropriation. Dayton had come over, and others of the hesitant. Even Muhlenberg, chairman of the Committee of the Whole, in which this discussion took place, now gave his casting vote in favor of the appropriation, and the resolution on its final passage was carried through the House by 51 to 48. There were only four votes

cast against it from New England, and only four in favor of it from the South, but the members from the Middle States had decided the contest by yielding to eloquence and an immense external pressure from their constituencies.

In September, 1796, Washington put forth a farewell address, which he had long contemplated issuing, and upon which, with the aid of others, he had labored carefully. In words of solemn benediction and free from all strain of cant or partisanship, this address inculcated political maxims of whose force experience had convinced him, and warned the people against the dangers of geographical parties, of the spirit of faction and the spirit of encroachment upon authority. The most apt and forcible passage, perhaps, in this famous and familiar state paper, and that which sank deepest, admonished his countrymen against foreign wiles and American intervention in the affairs of Europe. The idea of detaching this continent wholly and forever from the cabinet ambitions and calculations of the Old World over the balance of power was not as yet well comprehended by his fellow-citizens, and here Washington's valedictory left an abiding impression upon the international policy of the United States.

The well-chosen words in which America's venerated captain bade farewell to public station hushed faction into silence; and, the last rapids past, his bark went fitly down to a rich sunset through smooth waters, applauding multitudes crowding the banks, and parties emulating in respect, as though to borrow glory from his departing radiance. Addresses from public and private bodies reached Washington through the

winter from all quarters of the Union, couched in terms of loyal respect and affection. The legislatures of one State after another responded heartily to the farewell address, several ordering it to be entered at length upon their journals; among the rest that of Virginia, though reserved as to the wisdom of his late policy, now unanimously expressed respect for the President's person, a high sense of his exalted services, and regret for his approaching retirement.

CHAPTER IV.

ADMINISTRATION OF JOHN ADAMS.

§ I. Period of Fifth Congress. March 4, 1797-March 3, 1799.—
§ II. Period of Sixth Congress. March 4, 1799-March 3, 1801.

JOHN ADAMS was inaugurated President of the United States in the Representatives' chamber of the Congress Hall at Philadelphia. There was an immense crowd in attendance, many ladies occupying the seats of members, and the Senators, the justices of the Supreme Court, the cabinet officers, and the Spanish minister sat in distinguished array. Those entitled to places of special honor were announced by the doorkeeper as they entered from behind and approached the Speaker's desk. Washington, whose coach and four had stopped opposite the door of Independence Hall, walked through an avenue which the crowd had formed, and entered the Federal building cheered lustily. The inside applause, which was deafening, commenced the moment he entered the Federal hall as his name was called, and walked less deliberately than usual to take the seat assigned him on the right of the Speaker's chair; for it was remarked that he seemed hardly self-possessed and calm, but hurried as though desirous of escaping greater marks of respect than were due to a private citizen. Jefferson, who had taken his official oath as Vice-President at 11 o'clock, and assumed his new functions over the Senate in an

easy and rather trifling manner, next entered, and, separately announced and applauded, proceeded to occupy the corresponding seat on the left. He appeared tall, straight, good-tempered rather than imposing, his foxy hair very slightly powdered. Last was called the name of the chief man of the occasion, the new President, and John Adams came slowly down the aisle, dressed in a light-drab suit, with his hair powdered and in a bag. He bowed on each side in response to the plaudits which greeted him as he advanced, and mounting the platform took his seat in the Speaker's chair. Speaker Dayton sat in the clerk's seat below. At high noon two brass fieldpieces stationed in Potter's Field fired a salute, and Adams rose, bowed to different sides of the room, and delivered his inaugural address.

This address, one of the very best of the kind, was a strong, fearless, incisive production, quite characteristic of the author, evincing an admirable comprehension of those general maxims which ought to serve for the general guidance of an American administration, and at the same time vindicating his own inflexible attachment to free government and the constitution. Here, as upon the recent occasion of taking his leave of the Senate, he made an effort to dispel the old calumny that he was one who preferred a monarchy, and he meant to establish his title to public confidence as one who could well afford to stand upon a life-long record of patriotic service. A disposition to delicate dealing with State governments was avowed on his part; an impartial regard of the rights and interests of the whole Union, without sectional preferences; a resolution to do justice by all nations while avoiding the pestilence of foreign influence; a desire to be just

and humane in internal concerns, and to improve agriculture, manufactures, and commerce; and, finally, a veneration for the Christian religion. All these ideas were conceived and expressed in a comprehensive and catholic spirit.

In two points John Adams strained his emotions in order to make a good impression on his audience. Concerning the French nation he expressed a personal esteem on his part, formed in a residence of seven years chiefly among them, besides "a sincere desire to preserve the friendship which has been so much for the honor and interest of both nations." And with reference to his predecessor he turned, bowing towards the close, to pay him a graceful and laudatory tribute, which was greeted with acclamation, all the audience standing. These were the two themes uppermost in men's minds on this occasion.

At the conclusion of his speech the oath of office was administered by Ellsworth, the Chief Justice, Adams making his responses with fervor; after which the new President retired. An amusing strife of courtesy now ensued between Jefferson and Washington; the former attempting in vain to make the ex-President take precedence; and as the Vice-President finally walked up the aisle with Washington behind him, a loud shout went up; and then the audience jostled and rushed to the main entrance to get a last look at their chief of men.

Acccompanied by Pickering, Washington walked to the hotel where his successor now lodged, for the purpose of paying his personal respects, a crowd pressing after. The door was closed, but it presently opened again, and Washington stood there with uncovered head; he bowed three times and slowly retired, and

then the crowd gradually dispersed, most of them to behold him no more.

Three measures, all born of a single session,—the new Naturalization Act, the Alien Acts, and the Sedition Act,—for which the Federalist leaders were solely responsible, apart from their constituencies, weighted their party and the administration with all the odium of a wilful attempt to crush out political opponents rather than win them, and to weed the foreign-born out of the Union. The spirit of American institutions, and those safeguards which our constitution had diligently provided, forbade the extensive execution of such laws in the sense desired; while in the end that sullen obstinacy with which the authors clung to their miserable experiment, regardless of the voice of popular warning, overwhelmed Federalism presently with such utter disaster that it sank to rise no more.

1798.

These acts were not passed in the midst of a fierce and bloody revolution nor while a foreign war was raging, for then the violence, temporary only, and vindicated or else atoned afterwards, might have been forgiven. Indeed, they were projected, and that too in their very worst shape, before any tidings of the French mission beyond the X, Y, Z dispatches had reached this country, and when it was not certain that our embassy would fail; in a season, doubtless, of great public excitement, but where that excitement was directed to repelling in effect the expected invaders who had not approached these shores and never would. The only ground on which the Federalists sought openly to justify their present extreme measures was the suppression of all combinations between American Democrats

and the French army against our aristocrats and the ruling class; combinations which Harper and others affirmed were here, but for whose existence not the slightest proof ever appeared beyond, possibly, that afforded by a rare admission of communications from foreign official sources into the columns of some party newspapers; while the evidence is positive that our most influential Republicans, like Jefferson, Madison, and Gallatin, knew nothing whatever of French relations at this period, outside the usual channels which our Executive controlled. That, besides this unfounded fear, operated the desire of ultra Federalists to take revenge upon those presses which had assailed the British treaty and other pet measures and abused Federal leaders, and the determination to entrench themselves in authority by forcibly disbanding an opposition party which had attracted a readier support at the polls from the oppressed of other countries, like the Irish, Scotch, and French immigrants, no candid writer can at this day question. In order to accomplish their main purpose, the Federalists in the Alien Acts, as though the constitution were framed to protect natives alone, deliberately set aside trial by jury, and subjected those whom this government had but recently encouraged to seek an asylum and speedy citizenship to the arbitrary disposal, alien friends and alien enemies alike, of the chief Executive; and in the Sedition Act, distrusting the political bias or tenderer forbearance of State courts and prosecutors, they committed the accusation and sentence to Federal officers and tribunals,—in either case violating the spirit of our fundamental ordinance in order to insure a direction of the machinery favorable to their party ends.

To this persecuting policy, in its full significance,

the present Federalist leaders, with the exception of their greatest, Hamilton (himself an alien-born, and of a mind too comprehensive in its grasp not to take in dangers which escaped the notice of the others), now strongly committed themselves. Adams, whose practice proved kinder here than his theory, dropped, in some of his more indiscreet responses to the patriotic addresses, angry threats of an authority to correct the delusions which had led so many astray. The stern and relentless Secretary of State feared only that the measures as actually passed did not go far enough. Not a Federalist member of Congress had an apologetic word to utter for invading rights held hitherto sacred, nor a regret to express that political censors and the press needed the shackles.

It may be admitted that the Alien and Sedition Acts were not so dangerous, as actually passed, as they appeared in the preliminary stages. But we are to judge of the political animus of a party in no slight degree by what it attempts; and, as a historical fact, to the opposition at a late stage of the very members whose discomfiture was thereby intended and of the very newspapers to be throttled, rather than to the liberal inclinations of partisans who fathered these measures, we owe it chiefly that the Naturalization, Alien, and Sedition Acts stopped short of a tyranny, utterly detestable; so true is it, as the House showed by comparison with the Senate, that the salvation of a political majority lies in the constant need of confronting a vigorous minority and public opinion.

In November the legislature of Kentucky made a startling protest against the constitutionality of the Alien and Sedition Acts, in a series of resolutions which John Breckinridge introduced,

1798.

and which declared each act to be "not law but altogether void and of no force." These resolutions passed with but a few dissenting votes. A few weeks later the Virginia legislature, under John Taylor's lead, passed in December resolutions of similar drift but more moderate expression, pronouncing the Alien and Sedition Acts "palpable and alarming infractions of the constitution." The Kentucky resolutions instructed the delegates of that State to use their best efforts to procure a repeal of the obnoxious acts, while those of both Kentucky and Virginia made a solemn appeal to the other States, as though for a concurrence of sentiment, which might stimulate, if need be, a closer co-operation hereafter. These Kentucky resolutions were drafted in a bolder form by Jefferson, while those of Virginia proceeded more directly from Madison's pen. Jefferson's leading idea was to resolve the obnoxious acts unconstitutional and void, and assuming a defiant attitude towards the Federal Union in a corresponding sense, to push the principle of resistance to Congress, though only so far as events might render it prudent and desirable.

In thus organizing a revolt of the commune against class tyranny, against the suppression of free speech, the shackling of the press, and the outlawry of men who had sought these shores as an asylum from oppression, Jefferson calculated nicely the strength of the two opposing forces. This was to his mind a politic and political warfare, requiring firmness, but a passive firmness. Of his attachment to the Union, his recent letter to John Taylor was strong indication. Virginia and Kentucky, he hoped, would make such a diversion of opinion in the Middle States that the Federal government would not dare coerce; and he doubtless compre-

hended well that the blood stirs more to rouse the lion of revolutionary resistance than the hare of tame protest. But in his ardor when drafting these bold resolutions, he struck into a line of argument which asserted a dangerous latitude of discretion for States, or rather for State legislatures, over Federal legislation, a latitude which neither Breckinridge nor the judicious Madison chose fully at this time to approve, nor Jefferson himself to claim again. All the old thirteen States north of the Potomac hastened to disavow the idea that State legislatures could at discretion revise and disapprove a solemn act of Congress. But the discussion thus elicited served its main purpose in separating more clearly the friends and foes of the present proscriptive enactments; the curvature of the one party caused the other to bend in the opposite and more dangerous direction; and ardent Federalists in the State legislatures who now proceeded to affirm both the constitutionality and policy of the Alien and Sedition laws vindicated their consistency at the expense of their statesmanship.*

At whatever point the authors and zealous promoters of the Sedition law and sedition prosecutions meant

*Madison, who survived the South Carolina troubles in 1832, was most strenuous at that date to condemn the theory of nullification as then propounded by Calhoun, and to clear both himself and Jefferson, so far as possible, from the imputation of having fathered such a heresy, in the above Kentucky and Virginia resolutions. It is matter of record that Madison, by modifying the ideas Jefferson had furnished him, prepared resolutions and an address for the Virginia legislature, so adroitly and yet so forcibly worded as to keep the State within constitutional bounds, and hint only at forcible resistance, while urging sister States to concert in a strictly legitimate protest. The resolutions in Kentucky proposed still more temperate action, though asserting bolder dogmas, Jefferson's preamble being taken but not his conclusion.

that punishment for opposing government measures directed by proper authority, and trying to bring the President into contempt or disrepute, should cease, they evidently did not consider themselves debarred from thwarting President Adams when his executive course in foreign affairs interfered with their own designs, nor from combining to displace him from power as a vain, frantic, and obstinate man, now that he had succeeded in thwarting them. The Cabinet malcontents stirred up their friends to believe with them that unless Adams withdrew his name from the approaching canvass a national defeat of the party was inevitable.

The first secret cabals of the discontented contemplated bringing out Washington again for a third term. But the magnanimous soul which never could have stooped to the base uses of any party faction for a party emergency sped the scene whose sorest need of his service had vanished. Death sent a sud- 1799. den shaft to the heart which calumny had so December 14. long assailed in vain; and scarcely had a new Congress convened and organized before the two Houses were called upon to pay their last public honors to "the man, first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his fellow-citizens."

It has been the posthumous distinction of Washington to retain that first place, and to enjoy the name and fame of patriot father in each succeeding lustrum of American history, besides a world-wide renown beyond that of all others ever born, reared, and educated on American soil—a soil which was the sole arena of his life achievements. His eulogy was the grief of united millions, who had gradually become impressed by the beauty of a life devoted to their welfare, and who learned at last to realize that wherever and when-

ever party issues might touch him, the ether Washington breathed was always that where "eternal sunshine settles." France and Napoleon paid tributes to his memory not less touching than Great Britain. But unlike the rising Corsican, Washington stood securely on his pedestal as one who had subserved the cause of liberty always, instead of bringing liberty to subserve his private ambition. For one of the world's genuine heroes, his fame was well bestowed. Unlike Epaminondas, he left behind him a unity of States, too firmly compacted to perish with himself; nor did assassination deprive him of the sweets of public gratitude as it had the great Orange. Rewarded in the declining years of his life with a popular confidence like that bestowed in a more primitive age and a narrower circle upon Timoleon of Syracuse, Washington gained from posterity a renown which in later times has been most happily epitomized: "The greatest of good men, and the best of great men."

To the new Federal capital, now doubly consecrated in the hearts of the American people by the hallowed name of its deceased founder, the President welcomed Congress at its second and final session, congratulating the two Houses "on the prospect of a residence not to be changed." The removal of the Federal government to this sequestered and unpopulous region, over which it exercised exclusive jurisdiction, proved most timely; for had the closing scenes of so exciting a Presidential contest been enacted at Philadelphia, there would undoubtedly have been serious riots and probably bloodshed.

1800. November.

This was, indeed, a place for central seclusion. All

the way from Baltimore one rode hither through thick woods, seeing scarcely a house or a human being. An unfinished block on Capitol Hill marked the site of that great purchase of six thousand lots which had hastened the insolvency of Morris, Greenleaf, and Nicholson; their agreement with the government to build brick houses remaining unfulfilled. Scarcely five hundred inhabitants had yet appeared in the new city; and they were chiefly negroes and foreign laborers needful on the public works, who dwelt in cheap huts. Only the north wing of the splendid Capitol, commenced on this wooded height, whose southeast corner-stone Washington himself laid in 1793, with masonic ceremonies, peered above the clustering oaks. The President's house, some two miles to the westward, had been planned on a liberal scale, and was decently fit for habitation; but the plastering was damp, and some of the commonest conveniences were wanting. No fencing was yet visible in the city; brick-kilns peeped out here and there like ant-hills; nothing, wrote Wolcott, was plenty except provisions. So few and so scattered were the houses that comfortable quarters for the representatives of the nation could only be had in the neighborhood of Georgetown, whither, to the confusion of L'Enfant's plans, the gregarious and fashionably inclined must consequently have tended.

The excitement of the Presidential campaign had been intense. But the electoral issue having reduced itself mainly into a rival contest for capturing State legislatures, the immediate wishes of the people had been of secondary consideration.

It was not the national rivalry between Federalists and Republicans, as the event proved, which was here to jeopardize the Presidential title, but that fatal clause

of the constitution, as it then stood, under which each elector cast his two ballots without designating which should be President and which Vice-President. While their own dark intrigues for the "double chance" were frustrated this fall beyond a peradventure by the prudent dropping out of a single Pinckney ballot in Rhode Island, and both their candidates were defeated moreover, the ultra Federalists found a new opportunity presented for baffling the public wishes by an unexpected tie which occurred between Jefferson and Burr, whose electors appear to have held too faithfully together in the double vote for the immediate interests of the party. This, of course, prevented, and for the first time in our history, a constitutional choice of President by electors, and devolved the duty upon a House controlled by the political opponents of both Jefferson and Burr to decide which of the two they should make the Chief Magistrate.

1801. February. The day for the meeting of electoral colleges had been placed by law at the first Wednesday of December, and the second Wednesday of February following was the day fixed for opening the certificates and counting the votes. The two Houses, both of them inconveniently quartered in the north wing of the Capitol, assembled on the 11th of February in the Senate Chamber for the latter purpose. The count of the tellers showed, as already anticipated, that Jefferson and Burr had each 73 electoral votes, Adams 65, Pinckney 64, and Jay 1. As presiding officer of the Senate, the unwelcome duty devolved upon Jefferson of announcing that there was a tie vote between himself and Burr. Upon this announcement the House returned to its own chamber, there to continue in session, as that body had already resolved, without pro-

ceeding to other business, till a President should be chosen.

The ill-success of the Presidency of John Adams, regarded from a personal and party standpoint,—for in respect of the nation's interests it was by no means a failure,—we may trace in part to the unfortunate circumstances by which Adams was surrounded, and in part to faults inseparable from his headstrong and original character. He was unfortunate, first of all, in being the immediate successor of a President so transcendent in all those qualities which mark the practical administrator and command confidence as Washington; a successor, too, the first of that style, and committed substantially to the same line of policy and dependent upon the same elements for his active political support. It was a lengthening shadow that his more illustrious predecessor cast down nearly his whole official pathway; and for the year which followed Washington's death—the last months nearly of this present administration—the public grief was too great to be assuaged or diverted. The new President followed the old, therefore, seemingly at a long distance for the whole round, and was forced to perform various deferential tasks which only a spirit modest, venerating, and unenvious could have performed with cheerfulness. Adams was next unfortunate in inheriting from that former administration, admirable as it had been in most respects, its very serious embarrassment with France, which, complicated as it became by Talleyrand's misconduct, was not at length overcome without causing a sudden and almost ludicrous collapse of warlike enthusiasm on the part of our people; while subjecting them to those very

serious accompaniments of war, lavish expenditure, burdensome taxation, internal oppression; and breeding, besides, in the minds of influential partisans, those fancies of feverish ambition which are not easily dismissed. Adams was finally unfortunate in having been promoted to the command of political chieftains who neither implicitly trusted him nor performed loyal service; of a party remarkably intelligent, yet undisciplined, and liable to be led astray by malignant and caballing influences; and of Cabinet counsellors, unworthy the name, who set up for planets when they should have revolved as satellites.

But to a considerable degree John Adams was his own worst enemy for bearing successfully the responsibilities of Chief Magistrate under an elective government like ours. He was vain, jealous of rivals, ready to suspect the worst where he suspected at all, over-imaginative, irascible, stubborn, impatient of advice, apt to push his way in blind rage and regardless of consequences where his temper was aroused. Such an Executive is not easily influenced for good except by those who humor him in his moods and take care not to cross his prerogative; others may impress, indeed, if their views are sound, but not correspondingly. The brusque manners of Adams, his imprudence of expression, and indiscreet plain speaking (to the extent almost of thinking aloud, as one has described him), though not necessarily offensive to personal friends and equals who could take him as he meant, were to most men, especially while Adams occupied the highest dignity in the land and stood without official equal, an obstacle to free intercourse and the mutual interchange of opinions. Unlike Washington, who so sedulously sought advice, the new President seemed to confer with others

rather for the purpose of imparting his own views, and those most likely in the crude, and before gaining possession of all the data needful; and he had that tendency, so disagreeable to one who brings suggestions, of talking others down. Advice worked upon him; but by what process was not sufficiently obvious to flatter the person offering it, since the first impression conveyed to Adams's mind by the tender of counsel appeared to be the disagreeable one that he stood sadly in need of it; and hence, while the admonition might sink deep, the person admonishing became painfully conscious of striking at once upon an envious and sensitive surface, which emitted angry sparks as from a flint. In this important respect our two earliest Presidents strongly contrasted; and so, too, in those lesser courtesies of life such as draw closer or soothe irritation; for while the one could by his suavity conquer an enemy, the other imperilled the most essential friendship of his term by his jealous or heedless inattention.

The honest, simple frankness of Adams's nature was the main obstacle to the display of that light polish of daily life which lends such a charm to urbanity, well as he could comport himself on great occasions; but other traits interfered with such amenities, not so creditable to him. If it be not literally true, as some opine, that Adams, as President, would make an odious measure more odious still by his manner of executing it, we are compelled to admit that, at least, he too often displayed an unfortunate capacity for taking all the grace out of a kindly and favoring action, and stifling all sense of gratitude in the recipient, by the unkindly or ungracious manner in which he performed it. However near he might have ventured to the ground of the opposition leaders at times, away from his own party

lines, he seemed to feel it as necessary to deride their position as did the party Federalists, who, more consistent, blamed him for wandering thither.

What exposed Adams all the more readily to censure and misapprehension was his constant indisposition in private speech to acknowledge to their full the broad and lofty motives which impelled his public conduct, as though once again to point a contrast with his predecessor, whose calm morality was too much a matter of principle for him to think of being shamefaced over it. Adams, pure, disinterested, upright, as we must conceive him in the main, had yet that dread of cant which marks a faulty but heroic nature struggling with itself and yielding much to impulse. Hence in the effort not to seem better than he really was, he managed at times to appear much worse; giving partial, trivial, unsatisfactory reasons to others for acts which some strong conviction of right, some brave resolution welling from the lower depths of his generous and independent nature, must have led him to perform. He would talk like a Diogenes of men and motives, and profess his utter contempt for the public whose interests he was doubtless serving with all his might. His ambition for distinction was both purer and more intense than he owned to himself.

Adams was, as those who knew him best had observed before his present elevation, a bad calculator of the probable motives of other men, nor possessed of the requisite skill for managing them. Vehement as he had been in earlier years, so as to move these Colonies to declare for independence, it was his eloquence, his scholarship, his literary abilities, and the earnestness of his conviction as one of a deliberative

body among his peers, that carried persuasion. When it came to Executive duties and being looked up to as a political commander, the conditions of success were very different. Adams was not steady and sure in his guidance, nor sufficiently in the habit of directing other minds, to impress a policy upon those without whose willing co-operation it must fail. Rather did he let affairs drift so far as legislators might have the power of control, while he, for his part, regulated his own department, and most especially the diplomatic part of it, with a predilection for managing it as he might see fit. As all worked apart so much, the legislature not consorting with the Executive, and the Executive uninfluential in the legislature, his most desired measures passed with difficulty; while other acts went through Congress imposing onerous and unpopular duties upon him, which he appears to have had no special influence in shaping, but for which, withholding his veto, he appeared to the ungrateful public willing enough to take more than his share as sponsor. With more culpable indiscretion he permitted official subordinates, stern, narrow-minded, and moreover interested in their motives, to present to the country an administration far more spiteful and intolerant than he desired it, and less dispassionate in its foreign policy. Eccentric movements, sudden starts, inconsistent turnings perplexed the spectator; and this happened because the reins were handled by too many Phaetons, while Phœbus took his vacation and exercised only a sort of intermittent authority. For instead of allotting to each subordinate his just responsibility within his own sphere and prescribing the rules for all, instead of taking personal heed to the whole business of the Executive, the President

would let department heads combine to pull the administration, with outside assistance, in whatever direction they might, until they got so far wrong that he had to interpose again to set things as they should be. All this was partly because of his laxness as a disciplinarian, his indolence, his inaptitude for organizing, his indifference to routine details, his unbusinesslike habits; and, as we may further apprehend, too, because Adams, somewhat aware of his own shortcomings in respect of moulding and conciliating other minds so as to keep the topmost place securely in a political party, schooled himself in such a sense as to give others their unhindered way with whom he thought it impolitic to break, but whose opinions he knew not how to respect, nor how to adapt their public ends to the promotion of those he desired himself to pursue. While Washington had kept all things, great and small, under counsel, Adams worked without system or vigilance in the smaller concerns. With a mind too vigorous to feel the need of another's advice, he encouraged others unintentionally to misrepresent and misdirect his policy and lead the general public to false estimates of his probable conduct. It was with reference, perhaps, to his proneness for producing such external misconceptions, as well as to those fitful gusts of temper and speculations which caused him so to veer in his solitary course, that the sagacious Franklin once made the remark, of late frequently repeated by his political enemies, that Adams was "always an honest man, often a wise one, but sometimes wholly out of his senses."

Adams had, nevertheless, great virtues as well as great failings. Ambitious though he might be, he was the soul of earnest patriotism, and his ideal was always a lofty one, even should execution fall short of it. An

accomplished scholar, a statesman who had experienced much and travelled far, one of a vigorous and far-reaching intellect, he comprehended with great wisdom the most difficult problems which his administration encountered. With all his neglect of the small things, he had, doubtless, more than others appreciated, a fixed system as to the great; and this in his foreign policy most particularly, whose management he reserved peculiarly to himself, aware, doubtless, of the delicacy required in so grave a situation, and confident that he understood European politics and diplomacy better than any of his advisers. The general maxims he prescribed in his inaugural address were admirable. Adams may fairly be styled the father of our American navy; for to his perseverance and steady interest in its establishment we owe it that this arm of the service was placed for the first time upon a substantial and permanent footing. His penetrating mind had discovered, quite in advance of his times, that the belligerents of the Old World would not respect American commerce while it remained defenceless, and that the first successful war with France or England must be waged by us behind wooden walls rather than ramparts.

Whimsical and wrong-headed as Adams might be when the vapors of a wounded self-esteem steamed up and beclouded his vision, he was, apart from his peculiar foibles, consistent, just and upright; broad in his views and singularly disinterested. He was a statesman whose general honesty of purpose could always be relied upon; magnanimous when calm; disposed, though combative of disposition, to make amends where he had acted hastily and passionately, and consorting with men of liberal and enlightened views. Nearly all of the great appointments to office during

his term which were purely of his own selection were not merely good but excellent, and worthy of comparison with any made by his predecessor; those, for instance, of Marshall (whose rapid advancement in public station was owing largely to the favor of our second President), Stoddert, and Dexter; of both sets of envoys to France, Gerry possibly excepted; and of the naval commanders. His admirable qualities as a husband and father, his fondness for his farm, and the bosom confidence which he bestowed upon those at home, of his hopes and disappointments, attest the healthiness of his moral nature; though one must admit that his private virtues were not practised without some public detriment, inasmuch as long absence from his duties obstructed business, and his ambition to found a family conspicuous in national station exposed him to the imputation of nepotism. Except for some ill-considered utterances in the season of war fever, his state papers, messages, and addresses were lofty and well expressed, with clear, terse, ringing words and sentences, eminently characteristic of the man, and sure to produce a popular impression; and his bearing in public was dignified and manly, the more pleasing to his countrymen now that he had lowered the standard of courtly etiquette with which he had set out as Vice-President. He maintained well the bearing of an American Chief Executive in the eyes of the people so far as one, whose bravery was that of an eminent civilian alone, might be expected to. An Adams could stand courageously even when he had to stand alone; no better proof of which need be recalled than the grandly independent and fearless course he took in sending his second and successful embassy to France in 1799, giving peace and unexampled prosperity to his country

(as he asserted later), against the advice, entreaties, and intrigues of his ministers and all the leading Federalists in both Houses of Congress. This, the most questioned of all his actions, for which his breast received the poisoned arrows of malicious foes within his own party, years after his unwelcome retirement from public station, was, if we except the burning record of 1776, "the most disinterested, the most determined, prudent, and successful of his whole life."

With all his speculative tendencies unfavorable to Republican experiments, his preference for a strong government and executive power, John Adams was in closer sympathy with the people than most leaders of the party to which he belonged, and a more genuine American. Hateful of European governments alike, he loved his country best of all. To be "king of the commons," in a practical sense, would not have ill-chimed with his ambitious fancies; but monarchist he could not be at heart in the United States, and he became well-nigh a Jeffersonian Republican before he died.

The Federalist party, indeed, was already too cramped an organization to hold him. That party had done its greatest and fittest work by the time it accomplished its earliest: that, in brief, of framing and establishing the more perfect Union, which, with later changes, has stood ever since secure. Public gratitude, and the disruption of political opponents, procured a continuance in power under the wing of Washington sufficiently long for establishing the public credit, developing the resources of a new nation, concluding peace with the Indians and chief European countries,

and raising the United States to a respectable position before the civilized world. But while each new chamber was added to the shell, the nautilus had been working out. Great leaders had left the party; and by the time Washington died and the last treaty was ratified, under a successor, which detached the American Union from this European war, all the vitality which beautified Federalism was gone. Claims it certainly had still to public gratitude; but gratitude for the past will not preserve that party in the public estimation which lags in the work of the immediate present. Already had the political leaders with whom Federalism was now most identified taken to preparing feigned issues to supply the want of genuine ones; and they strove by playing upon the wildest fears and prejudices of the multitude to perpetuate themselves and their party in power. The bickerings of great rivals, the bureau intrigues against Adams and that foreign policy of pacification which the country most desired, the centralizing schemes, the usurious loans, the high salaries, the multiplicity of offices, the taxes, the provisional armies, the exhausting war preparations without an enemy in sight—all this, even such of it as prudence might well have justified, was lead to the neck of the party which struggled to bear up the general responsibilities through an angry sea.

No political party in a time of popular commotion could ever boast in America a more splendid body of voters; social rank, talent, wealth, learning, supported Federalism, in New England more especially. But in that same section where the brain of the party was located, and among those whom Hamilton chiefly influenced, were to be seen too many leaders whose tastes

were infallibly to keeping up a rule of social caste, and who despised too greatly our essay at self-rule and the sense of a commonalty. A government like ours could not walk alone, they thought, nor hardly stand, and they must guide its footsteps. On the contrary, the time had now come when political nurture could be dispensed with, and a healthy, robust public opinion allowed an oportunity to develop. The Alien and Sedition laws, all that machinery for compulsory discipline, tottered to the ground, carrying those who had sought to erect it. Federalism was lost in the first hour of its absolute supremacy, and as soon as it essayed in earnest to rule the American people by its own effete maxims.

Unfitted by temperament for dealing with the new conditions presented in our constitutional American experiment, bewildered, indocile, as little capable of playing sycophant to the common mass as of believing in a self-constrained democracy, the leaders hitherto prominent in national affairs soon disappeared from the scene, or remained to play the part of useless obstructors. Some of the greatest Federalists withdrew into the Judiciary Department, there to escape political responsibility. Others became governors and legislators in their native States. Wrapping himself in his mantle of pride, the Bourbon Federalist watched wearily for Jacobinism to run out its course. The sun of Federalism had sunk forever, going down in the murky sunset of its discreditable Presidential intrigues. The first national party to conduct the affairs of this Constitutional Union expired with the administration of the second President. Hushed was its voice of command. And yet so constantly had it ruled, so firmly, and in the

main so beneficently, even when despotically, that men gathered in its death-chamber like that of the great Roman emperor, and tendered their homage to the illustrious remains as they lay in solemn pomp, long after the last vital breath had departed.

CHAPTER V.

FIRST ADMINISTRATION OF THOMAS JEFFERSON.

§ I. Period of Seventh Congress. March 4, 1801-March 3, 1803. —§ II. Period of Eighth Congress. March 4, 1803-March 3, 1805.

THE first inaugural ceremonies ever conducted at the permanent capital of this nation took place on the 4th of March, 1801, at noon, when Thomas Jefferson was there inducted into office, as the third President of the United States.

Though the order of exercises was similar to that of former occasions, and the day was celebrated in Philadelphia and the Virginia towns with speeches, processions, salutes, and the ringing of bells, the scene at the Federal capital was unimposing, as befitted the inauguration, in a forest city, of one who at all times looked with singular contempt upon dazzling and ostentatious public spectacles. Pennsylvania Avenue was not the scene of a military pageant; it was as yet scarcely more than a footway cut through bushes and briers and aided in places by gravel and chips of freestone. Attired in the dress of a plain citizen, Jefferson crossed over to the Capitol from his lodgings at Conrad's, on the hill, some two hundred paces distant, to take the oath of office. Whether he went on foot, or rode his horse,—dismounting, on this occasion, as he often used to do later, when paying Congress a visit, and then hitching the steed unaided,—is in historical

dispute; but in either case posterity is taught the same impressive lesson of ceremonial simplicity. He entered the Senate chamber at the north wing, which, being partly finished, might accommodate both Houses. That there was something of a procession appears most probable; for Jefferson came attended by a number of his fellow-citizens, mounted and on foot. He found the new freestone structure thronged at his arrival with spectators eager for the induction ceremonies to begin.

The Senate had previously convened in extra session, summoned by the late President; and the polished Burr, by this time sworn into the office which the voice of his party had originally assigned to him, took position in the unfinished chamber, on Jefferson's right, while Marshall, the Chief Justice, sat upon the left. Many members of the late House, Federalists as well as Republicans, had remained over, out of respect or curiosity, to attend the inauguration; most of the cabinet and other high functionaries of the late administration occupied their places; but it was matter of open comment that neither President Adams nor Speaker Sedgwick was present, both having left the city at daybreak.

Jefferson's inaugural address remains a model of its kind; conciliatory, elevated in tone, full of hope and confidence in the American experiment; modest, nevertheless, as to personal merits. In a strain of eloquent thought, unadorned by graces of delivery—for Jefferson was no orator—he depicted "a rising nation, spread over a wide and fruitful land, traversing all the seas with the rich productions of their industry, engaged in commerce with nations who feel power and forget right, advancing rapidly to destinies beyond the reach of mortal eye." Of the strength and adequacy of this,

a republican government, for its own preservation, he boldly declared himself profoundly convinced. So far from admitting that possibly this Federal system, the world's best hope, was wanting in energy, "I believe this, on the contrary," said he, "the strongest government on earth. I believe it is the only one where every man, at the call of the laws, would fly to the standard of the land, and would meet invasions of the public order as his own personal concern."

Introducing thus the thought that the strongest of rulers is the people capable of self-rule, he appealed at the same time for that unity of action which all political parties ought to subserve. Minorities should be generously respected. "Every difference of opinion is not a difference of principle. We have called by different names brethren of the same principle. We are all Republicans.—We are Federalists. If there be any among us who would wish to dissolve this Union or to change its republican form, let them stand undisturbed as monuments of the safety with which error of opinion may be tolerated where reason is left free to combat it."

The inaugural address impressed the country most favorably. Popular government was taught to fly by making use of its own wings. Never had American executive so confided himself in language to the good will of those he had been elected to govern. Had he thus confided, or did he flatter? But, while the great body of Federalists saw in these maxims much to which they could heartily subscribe, much indeed that in the heat of political strife they had been taught to dissociate from Jefferson and his followers, their ruling minds construed this address too readily into a surrender of principles and patronage. Jefferson was too

consummate a politician to intend anything of the kind. His design was, of course, to harmonize parties; not, however, by making peace with the chieftains who had perversely opposed him, but by drawing from them their own followers. His opportunity was good for setting the Union on the Republican tack. The course of affairs in Europe had dispelled the first sanguine illusions of the French Revolution, and Americans were more cordially united in that policy of strict neutrality which Washington's Farewell Address commended. Adams had unravelled the worst knot in our foreign relations. Peacefully disposed towards all Europe, America had struck the high road to plenty and prosperity. Republicanism, in order to succeed, needed, therefore, to develop not an external so much as an internal policy; and it was upon the latter that Jefferson relied most at the outset to give his cause stability and earn the general gratitude.

Jefferson's designs developed more clearly when he began appointing to office. With reference to patronage the situation was certainly very delicate. For the first time a new national party had been lifted into power; a party whose members had for the four years previous been jealously excluded and even removed from office because of their politics. None could deny that Republicans had a reasonable claim to vacancies which might occur until they should fairly participate in the national offices. Moreover, the recent conduct of prominent Federalists in the Burr intrigue, and the enlargement of the national judiciary as their last stronghold,—President Adams's "midnight appointments," too, as they were called, made during the ex-

piring hours of his own administration, for the purpose of forestalling a successor's discretion whom the country had months before elected over him,—had been too outrageous for the new President to overlook, much less to sanction. While once more Jefferson prepared to accept and consolidate with the Republican body the many Federalists who now seemed disposed to reconciliation, he perceived that pride and obstinacy would restrain their most powerful leaders from coalescing, and more particularly that in the Eastern quarter, where British prepossessions were strong, and the influence of the Congregational clergy and the ruling families had been so constantly cast against him, prejudice would remain inveterate. The advice given by some of his more zealous political friends was to purge out the offices thoroughly, and the party pressure for place was, of course, very great.

But Jefferson by no means inclined to the doctrine of portioning out official places as the spoils of a party or of personal triumph. While refusing, from principle, to elevate his chief opponents to office, and determined to ship forever out of influence the Essex junto, the monarchists and the British faction (so he styled them), as men to be tolerated but not trusted, he yet thought it both just and prudent to deprive none of office on political grounds alone. Reflection brought him to the following conclusions: (1) That as to the appointments to civil offices at executive pleasure which his predecessor had made after the Presidential result was known, no mercy should be shown. (2) That officers guilty of official misconduct (or, one might add, notoriously inefficient) were proper subjects of removal. (3) That good men differing only in political belief, and performing their functions diligently, were

not proper subjects of removal. Another cause for removal occurred to him after some experience: that of electioneering activity, or of open, persistent, and industrious opposition to the principles of his administration; for while, he said, every officer of the government might vote at elections according to his conscience, he should betray the cause committed to his own care were he to permit the influence of official patronage to be used to overthrow that cause.

Jefferson's methods of appointment indicate the gloved hand, steadiness of purpose as well as delicacy in management, a combination of qualities which goes far towards securing political success. But beyond this he soon proved that he had the power of inspiring confidence and of impressing his ideas upon those with whom he was brought into the closest relations. No President ever kept such peace in his official household, or sat so gracefully at the head of the council board. His Postmaster-General and all of his cabinet advisers remained long in place: Madison, Gallatin, and Dearborn through the entire administration of eight years; Gallatin and Granger some five years longer.

"The third administration, which was of eight years," wrote Jefferson in 1811, "presented an example of harmony in a cabinet of six persons, to which perhaps history has furnished no parallel. There never arose, during the whole time, an instance of an unpleasant thought or word between the members. We sometimes met under differences of opinion, but scarcely ever failed, by conversing and reasoning, so to modify each other's ideas as to produce a unanimous result." This harmony was owing, in no slight degree, to the rule with which the new President set out, of making himself a central point for the different branches of

the Executive, so as to preserve unity of object and meet the due responsibility for whatever was done. As he planned the work of practical administration, the ordinary business of every day was to be transacted upon consultation between the President and the head of that department alone to which it belonged. For measures of importance or difficulty consultation with the heads of departments was needful; and for this he preferred in theory to take their opinions separately, in conversation or in writing; thus leaving the President free, without any needless clash of opinion or rivalry among those he had consulted, to make up an opinion for himself; but he practised the open cabinet method of his predecessors without experiencing any ill results. The latter is now the confirmed practice of government; "yet," said Jefferson, who held firmly to Presidential responsibility, "this does, in fact, transform the executive into a directory, and I hold the other method to be more constitutional."

The ex-President found retirement, but not repose, at Quincy, his tempestuous nature struggling under a political reverse, which the opprobrium of those he had led to defeat, for whose own perverseness he was compelled to suffer, together with comparisons invited by the new administration to his detriment, made terribly humiliating. A far happier privacy was that which rounded the useful existence of the upright and philanthropic Jay, who left politics voluntarily, at the age of fifty-six, devoting a final third of his life to works of benevolence, and surviving all enmities. Cheerful, of independent means, a devout Episcopalian, an anti-slavery champion, his mind did not rust in his country

home. "I have a long life to look back upon," he would say, "and an eternity to look forward to."

Thriving, like many of his political friends, with the best briefs which professional eminence could command, Hamilton grew, nevertheless, despondent of America, and of his personal future; for nothing could reconcile such a spirit to the commonplace of life. He tried to enjoy the beautiful country-seat he had lately purchased, and his garden, "the usual refuge," as he would say, "of a disappointed politician." "What can I do better," he asked, gloomily, "than withdraw from the scene? Every day proves to me more and more that this American world was not made for me."

The famous Louisiana treaty was signed May 3, 1803, in the French language, and two or three days after in English. On the Sunday previous to its execution, Livingston presented his colleague to Napoleon, and both dined with him afterwards. The Consul asked many questions, after his quick, catechizing fashion, concerning the United States, Jefferson, and the Federal city. "You Americans," said he, "did brilliant things in your war with England; you will do the same again." Monroe, parrying this thrust at our neutral policy, responded that the Americans would always behave well when it was their lot to go to war. Marbois relates that as soon as the three negotiators had signed the treaties they all rose and shook hands; Livingston, who was a man of dignified presence, giving utterance to his joy and satisfaction in feeling that the United States now took a position among the powers of the first rank.

By this sudden, momentous, and in its full extent

and scope, unexpected acquisition of territory, the United States were indeed placed at the portals of an illustrious career. But yesterday the Mississipppi was the barrier of our national ambition, and a foreign king considered whether his own license restrained him from shutting up the outlet to our Western commerce. A stroke of the pen changed all; and to-day a vast, unexplored, almost illimitable empire was ours; perpetual immunity from dangerous neighbors; sole possession of this river of rivers, with all its tributaries; a sure dominating influence in the affairs of the North American continent; national opportunities for the dim future almost depressing in their sublimity. Where, now, would the long surf of our advancing civilization dash into spray? Hitherto natural barriers, those surest bound-marks and protectors from foes within and without, arrested our progress; henceforth, the tide of emigration would sweep from post to post, encroaching upon foreign populations too weak everywhere to resist; nor, unless internal decay and dismemberment arrested the novel experiment, finding effectual bulwark or breakwater interposed east of the Pacific or north of the Isthmus, while an acre of desirable territory was left. Would that encroachment go on forever or would dismemberment interrupt it?

Hopes and misgivings together like these filled Jefferson's mind as he contemplated the grandeur of the new purchase. Not fully observant of the latitude line which slavery had begun to draw across the Union, he meditated upon a possible separation which the great longitudinal river might at some later age accomplish. West Mississippi and East Mississippi might hereafter separate, and these millions of acres with their varied productions pass into the control of a confederacy de-

tached from that which now purchased them. But this was a remote danger, too remote to affect living men, and far less a present evil than that of a hostile nation's occupation. "The future inhabitants of the Atlantic and Mississippi States," such were his thoughts, "will be our sons. We leave them in distinct but bordering establishments. We think we see their happiness in their union, and we wish it."

One serious doubt in Jefferson's mind was the constitutionality of thus extending the area of the United States. As a strict constructionist, he considered that our fundamental charter made no provision for acquiring new and foreign territory, still less for incorporating foreign nations with the Union at discretion. But Spain's opposition on the solemn grounds we have indicated, and rumors, besides, that France had already repented of the bargain, determined him in favor of the most instant and explicit consummation; after which he thought appeal might be made to the nation for a suitable amendment to the constitution. Ultimately, however, he yielded his judgment in favor of the looser constitutional construction which Gallatin and others of his immediate counsellors advocated. The right of territorial expansion on this continent, coupled with an equal participation by the annexed people in fundamental American rights, dangerous though such a doctrine may be if pushed far, has since been firmly grafted upon the constitution in practice, as incidental to the powers originally conferred by that instrument.

Thrust out of influence, bankrupt in purse and prospects, politically discarded by his State and by the national Republican party, his Federal coalition a

failure, Burr sought a desperate revenge. Unable to make specific charges, he now demanded imperiously of Hamilton a broad disavowal of all offensive expressions concerning him, or else the satisfaction usual among gentlemen. Finding Burr inflexible, Hamilton chose the latter alternative; reason and conscience protesting against an encounter to which his romantic sense of honor impelled him, and which he hoped to justify by sparing in any event the life of the man who sought his blood. He was not without presentiment that he would be a victim; and Burr, who felt no compunction, practised carefully at a mark to make sure of it. The duel, after being postponed to an opportunity mutually convenient, took place in the gray of a July morning on the Jersey shore. The parties were prompt with their seconds and attendants. On the signal Burr raised his arm, took aim with coolness and precision, and shot Hamilton in the right side. Hamilton's pistol went off into the air as if involuntarily, and he fell upon his face mortally wounded. Burr fled; his fainting victim was conveyed across the river by boat once more; and in the house of his second, after suffering great agony of mind and body, he expired the next day. 1804. July 11, 12.

Thus unhappily was flung away one of the most vivacious spirits ever yet vouchsafed to this New World. Hamilton's soaring greatness, his energy, his fertility in resources, and the faults in combination with the virtues of his remarkable character, we have sought faithfully to depict in the course of this narrative. As his views on political subjects were expressed plainly and frankly in writing on every emergency, exploring from top to bottom, so to speak, and as his writings have been published, only they need misunderstand Hamil-

ton at this day who rely upon the exaggerated phrase of contemporaries; of those on the one hand who felt that the Union could not endure with him, and of those on the other who were assured that it could not last without him. No estimate, however, of Hamilton can be complete which fails to take into account the precocity of his intellect and the almost juvenile stage of that career which was so illustrious under all discouragements. This prodigy of executive ability; this Cæsar of a commonplace world, which yielded, unfortunately for the scope of his powers, more to laws than to individuals; this financier, whose feats with the public credit had astonished two continents; this imperial soul, which had dwelt in near companionship to Washington; this statesman, who at thirty-five despised the subtle Jefferson, a man nearly fifty, who sought at the same time to bend that venerable oak, John Adams, who never doubted his own position among the wealthiest, the oldest in family influence, in a country upon which he had been cast, a waif; this wonderful American reached the zenith of his public influence when about thirty, and died at forty-seven. What might he not have accomplished, it may be asked, had he lived to devote his riper years to his fellow-countrymen? Not, we apprehend, a new and more brilliant public career. For the more that political power passed to the American mass, the more surely was he cut off from participating in it. Hamilton was fitted to rule a decaying, but not to lead a rising republic. He was boldest in time of public danger, and only despaired when all was peace and safety, so that personal prowess would be impossible. As Gouverneur Morris, his sympathetic friend and eulogist, felt compelled to admit, Hamilton was covetous of glory more than of wealth or power, and while con-

scious that a monarchy in America was unattainable, so constantly and indiscreetly avowed his attachment to it, that he cut himself off from all chance of rising into office. And it is certain that to Washington's personal friendship and protection he owed almost solely his political opportunities, the strongest partisans not daring to expose him to the test of the ballot. Among distinguished men the popular instinct rarely errs as to genuine friends, or rejects without a cause; calumnies manifold could not extinguish the popularity of a Washington or a Jay. Hamilton would have grown prudent; but with his social, professional, and political friendships he was likely to pass into a confirmed pessimist. Too frank to suppress his own convictions, too honorable to meanly court applause, he had likewise too much pride of intellect to acknowledge error. His ideal of distinction was irreconcilable with respect for the common sense and common dignity of mankind; he asked little advice, trusting his untried pinions on the widest flight; and lovable, as doubtless he was, in his own circle, he was incapable of becoming in the broad sense a lover of the people. But supposing Hamilton's patriotism to have broken out in a new flame when our later troubles came with Europe, dissolving his British prepossessions, and restoring him and Madison to their youthful harmony, what glory might not have redounded to the American arms under such a commander? Hamilton was, however, a scholar in his leisure hours, studious of the ancients, interested, too, in modern systems, observant of foreign precedents. Aside from his professional acquirements, which were enough to bring him fame and an ample competence, he might have become a philosopher, an expounder of comparative politics, an American Montesquieu. Tow-

ards such an investigation, in truth, his active mind, released from public responsibilities, had latterly turned.

But an enemy's bullet stopped all opportunities for good or ill. Hamilton perished untimely; a disbeliever in national dismemberment, but to the last a dreamer, a fatalist, lamenting a political system which seemed poisoned with democracy, and recognizing it as his paramount duty to maintain the code of honor in view of emergencies which might later arise. A grand impulse to our national system, with consolidation as the corrective of a confederacy; liberal national powers; protection, force, and energy in the central government; financial stability,—these were Hamilton's great legacy to the American Union.

Of all advisers Jefferson's most valuable were his two chief Secretaries; both men of excellent parts and experience, believers in his fundamental policy and in the sincerity with which he pursued it, respecters of one another. A combination so felicitous at the head of affairs as that of Jefferson, Madison, and Gallatin has seldom been seen. The chief had the faculty of originating, the enthusiastic temperament, the wide philanthropy, the gift of managing men; the others, who were less buoyant and magnetic, more conservative, more respectful of precedent and more distrustful, fitted admirably their subordinate, yet exalted station, and checked Jefferson in the disposition to doctrinize and innovate. It is worthy of notice that two men, marked hitherto as leaders in legislative proceedings, quickly developed good business methods in their executive administration; and still further that, transferred to

the cabinet in the prime of life, each devoted to the public a long future without ever entering a legislature again, or extending his fame as an orator. Madison, to be sure, held a department which the immediate President was most competent to direct; while Gallatin became a financier and specialist, whose functions, less capable of Presidential guidance, were, for the present term certainly, the most essential of all to the prosperity of a Republican administration whose prime concern it was to retrench expenditures, pay off the public debt, and collect a rising revenue.

We are to picture the American Neckar at this time as a compact man of medium stature, with black hair, a bald head, dreamy, hazel eyes, dark complexion, and a countenance which indicated self-absorption, prudent calculation, reticence, and excessive caution; Swiss, not French, in temperament; a wholly different personage, in truth, from the crack-brained zealot, whiskey insurrectionist, and frog-eating foreigner, depicted by the imagination of those who had never beheld him. He was temperate in habits, somewhat shy, and the hardest worked man at the capital; taking little recreation, nor knowing well how to enjoy it. Not equal to Hamilton as a financier to rear a system from the foundation, Gallatin was a much safer custodian of the purse when economies and husbandry were in order. Cold and reserved, as always, commanding respect in his party for talents, purity, and principle, but no longer conspicuous, if ever so, for a lawless intolerance of ills incurable, Gallatin felt in his new position the necessity of conciliating capital and those money centres where only conservatism can command. An exile of choice, patrician in birth, he felt the exile's isolation; his heart expanded in the domestic circle, but that circle was a nar-

row one; for the rest he found friends, and powerful ones, but not intimate, and such for the most part as watch sedulously the political barometer. Had prejudice availed, as he once feared it would, to keep him out of Jefferson's cabinet, he intended moving to New York City and practising at the bar. As a cabinet officer, and one dependent upon his salary, he grew very nervous over the turmoil of factions in the great middle State and section he represented, and, unlike the President, would have temporized with Burr and held the rod over Duane. Not a false friend, Gallatin kept too much guard over his heart to be a firm one; and hence, among rivals and adversaries, of whom every politician finds plenty, he would most likely have stumbled except for Jefferson, whose confidence was implicit and at the same time generous.

Fixing the boundaries of the various Indian tribes, as well as of the great territories themselves, occupied more seriously than before the national attention. It was the President's wish to reclaim these children of nature from the savage state; leading them, if possible, to abandon the chase, devote themselves to civilized pursuits, and settle in fixed habitations. Spinning and weaving might, he thought, be profitably introduced among them, also the tillage of small farms; and thus would they become more disposed to part with the large tracts, which to them had been mere hunting grounds, besides gradually fitting themselves to become citizens of the United States. "In truth," he wrote in 1803, "the ultimate point of rest and happiness for them is to let our settlements and theirs meet and blend together, to intermix and become one people. Incor-

porating themselves with us as citizens of the United States, this is what the natural progress of things will, of course, bring on, and it will be better to promote than to retard it."

We may here recall some of the homelier traits of Jefferson's administration, which, on the whole, enhanced his popularity, while constantly widening the chasm between him and political precisians of the old school.

The old school and the Old World laid great stress upon official dignity, and the use of ceremonial forms; these they thought essential for fostering the spirit of allegiance, which is akin to reverence, and requires a shrine. But Jefferson stripped government as much as possible of all false externals and led from idols to the ideal of a progressive society, ruled by common consent as the majority might determine, and obeying its best impulses. In that general progressiveness to the highest good, he saw a study for history far worthier than in the strut and stride of potentates who borrow false illusions from the glare of a court life to make its ambitions seem unduly glorious. Things trivial of themselves bent, and sometimes ludicrously, to this standard of philosophy. First of all, the new President abolished levees and courtly drawing-rooms, nor would he suffer society at the capital to inflict such entertainments upon him for its own amusement. Departing still further from the example of the two previous administrations, he refused to have his birthday known or celebrated. On two days of the year, New Year's and the Fourth of July, the doors of the White House were kept open; the former occasion, which was the

more suitable for the latitude of our permanent capital, remaining ever since its chief festal day. He lived in one corner of the unfinished White House, then known as the "Palace," plain in his manners, always accessible to those who called. He gave official dinners in excellent style, entertaining public characters after the usual custom, but heedless of nice questions of precedence in seating his guests, and disposed to adopt what was known as the "pell-mell" arrangement. In dress he was careless, often slipshod, like one engrossed in other matters; combining, too, the fashions of an old and new era, as might suit his own passing fancy. For with all his zeal as a reformer at this late time of life, Jefferson showed habits, tastes, and general methods savoring of that eighteenth century conservatism to which he had been educated; and his personality was that of one who introduced, rather than embodied, our modern America, and modern politics.

The rustic seclusion of the new capital made it, of course, the easier for Jefferson to indulge in what might now be thought a freakish subversion of common forms; besides which he was a widower. When his married daughters visited him, he enjoyed sitting on the floor and playing with his grandchildren. Avoiding, too, upon principle, all grand tours and processions, and travelling modestly between the Potomac and Monticello in the seasons of recess, he breathed constantly a social atmosphere redolent of home and old friends, while his fame went far and wide without him.

Captivating manners, wide information, and quick sympathy with humankind—a book which he fully mastered—assured Jefferson against contempt. On all

scientific subjects he talked remarkably well for an amateur; geography and natural philosophy were among his favorite studies. His general scholarship was remarkable for his times, and when a subject occupied his thoughts he investigated deeply. Discursive in conversation, with a tendency to paradox, he imparted striking suggestions, and often enthusiasm. He corresponded well with the eminent savants of both continents. At his table he appeared easy and good-tempered, watchful of the moods of his guests, and taking care that the name of none should escape him. Not vulgar, nor with a mind which worked only in political grooves, he well maintained, after his peculiar fashion, the dignity of the Presidential office.

The fastidious of Jefferson's time thought the New Year's reception a Saturnalia. Odd figures and odd dresses were to be seen in the windows and on the grand staircase; the footpaths of the Presidential grounds were thronged; President's Square was crowded by two o'clock with a crowd of spectators, white and black. The Marine and Italian bands played for the general entertainment. Wine, punch, and more delicate refreshments were provided for the guests, who arrived some on foot and some in carriages, all helter-skelter. The President stood at the head of the reception-room with his cabinet, his figure slender, more than six feet high, his step elastic, his reddish hair turning from sandy to gray; frank and affable in speech, and yet self-possessed; now friendly, now courteous, according to the person he addressed, whom he generally seemed to know by name; simplicity the great charm of his manner. Among the diplomatic corps appeared singular contrasts: the French Minister was decked in gold lace; the Tunis ambassador, who conversed in Italian, wore

his silk slippers, turban, and a robe displaying his scarlet jacket beneath, which was embroidered with buttons of precious stones. A train of Indian warriors would sometimes join the throng bedecked in war finery, with blankets and deer-skin moccasins, feathers on their head, and silver pendants from the nose and ears.

With this wholesale hospitality, state dinners, and the constant demands upon his private fortune, Jefferson retired from the Presidency a poor man, and suffered painful embarrassments in his last years through the guests who swarmed at his tables. In personal habits, nevertheless, he was far from extravagant; eating sparingly at the table and avoiding stimulating liquors. He kept a French cook and liked French dishes; a peculiarity for those days which had caused Patrick Henry to denounce him on the stump as one who "abjured his native victuals." When first chosen President he is said to have arranged for purchasing a coach and four; but no such equipage seems to have appeared conspicuously, and a favorite steed bore him on most excursions, private or official, during his term of office. He rode splendidly, though a civilian; he had always been fond of horses; and his robust health he attributed largely to horseback exercise, which he pursued regularly to almost the last day of his long life.

Jefferson did not improve much upon Washington and Adams as to remaining at the seat of government in midsummer. "Grumble who will," he said, "I will never pass those months on the tide-water." But Monticello was at a moderate distance, and the public business was running smoothly. Nor did Madison live far away in vacation. Respectful addresses from legislatures and corporate bodies received, of course, the

attention of our third President as formerly; and common delegations began to come, besides, with their homely expressions of good-will. He carefully avoided gift-taking, as well as nepotism; presents were refused, excepting a bust from the Emperor of Russia.

CHAPTER VI.

SECOND ADMINISTRATION OF THOMAS JEFFERSON.

§ I. Period of Ninth Congress. March 4, 1805-March 3, 1807.—§ II. Period of Tenth Congress. March 4, 1807-March 3, 1809.

IMPRESSMENT, which now became and continued the standing grievance against Great Britain, was an indignity to which no self-respecting nation could patiently submit. Loss of property will long be borne, but the unatoned outrage upon the person of a citizen provokes instant retaliation and war. Nevertheless the United States had shown great forbearance on this subject, and ever since 1790 had sought by fruitless negotiation to rectify the mischief. The fundamental right which England claimed was that of using her own citizens by arbitrary seizure to fight her maritime battles; and once a citizen always a citizen. At first her pretension of reclaiming citizens, once in allegiance, appears to have been confined to British seamen who had deserted from some ship and entered the American service. Gradually, however, it extended farther, all British subjects being claimed and seized, whether deserters or otherwise. And yet, in face of their own principles, the British ministry would refuse to discharge an American seaman settled or married in England, or one who had voluntarily entered

the British service. By right of the American Revolution our citizens, formerly British, had acquired unquestionably as of right an independent American allegiance.

But it was not the real or pretended right to impress British subjects, so much as the means of enforcing that right, to which the United States took chief exception. So far as this government was concerned, arrangements would not have been difficult for the mutual surrender of deserters upon a reciprocal obligation to observe good faith. But Great Britain consented to no such arrangement. She made no demand for her deserting seamen. On the contrary, she used force, and exercised a discretion of her own, which, utterly ignoring the co-sovereignty of the parties, led of necessity to the greatest abuse. British naval officers would stop and overhaul an American merchantman, muster its passengers and sailors on deck, and carry off forcibly all whom it might suit their convenience to claim as British subjects. This was done not in British ports alone, but in those of neutrals and upon the high seas. The interested party and the stronger one was judge of his own cause. Sailors were wanted, and the British press-gang laid the universe under contribution. Hence did the abuse of the impressment principle far outrun the principle itself. Thousands of American natives were taken in the pretended exercise of a British right of search; foreigners, too, whose language and personal appearance showed distinctly that they were not Britons. Meantime the remedy, in case of mistaken seizure, was slow and by no means adequate, nor was recompense or indemnity afforded for it. The commerce of the United States was injured by the actual loss of American seamen and by the dread which kept

others from exposing themselves to the peril of capture for bloody work upon an English frigate.

The conspiracy of Burr now flamed suddenly in the sky like some comet, wholly unexpected, whose coming seems the presage of destruction. But when seen that conspiracy had ceased to be dangerous. The bearing of this enterprise upon our internal politics was very slight, except to strengthen public confidence in the energy of the Executive, and to cement to the Union, as was highly needful, the loyalty of our immense Mississippi country. For the rest, we may regard it as a phenomenal exhibition of hazy native imperialism, quite unfit for modern America.

Wilkinson turned against Burr at the critical moment, and by his energetic preparations at New Orleans crushed the enterprise in which he had been promised the second place of command.

It only remained for the Federal courts to deal with the offenders as they deserved, all other trials being postponed to that of the chief conspirator. But here the law shielded the prisoners. No conviction of treason was possible under our constitution unless some overt act could be proved on the testimony of two witnesses. Burr's trial at Richmond collapsed upon a ruling of Marshall, the Chief Justice, to the effect that the enlistment and assembling of men at Blennerhassett's Island showed no overt act of treason; that even if it did, Burr's agency was not manifest; and that the overt act must first be established before testimony of Burr's conduct or declarations elsewhere was admissible. Burr's second trial, which was for simple misdemeanor, failed upon a point of jurisdiction; and

though Burr and Blennerhassett were afterward held for trial in the district of Ohio upon this less heinous charge, the government abandoned their cause, and the other indictments were dismissed. The chief recollection of this famous prosecution is the forensic triumph achieved by one of the counsel on the government side, the eloquent William Wirt, whose fervid description of Blennerhassett's island home—the ideal of a literary retreat, such as through life haunted his own imagination,—still retains a place among our oratorical extracts.

To Blennerhassett Burr was indeed the serpent invading Eden. A charming home was ruined, a lovely family scattered. Soldiers committed pillage; creditors attached the estate; the dwelling, a quaint wooden house, with curved wings and a running piazza, was burned to the ground. Unsuccessful in speculations by which he hoped to repair his fortune, the outcast vainly sought public office in Canada, and afterwards in Ireland, and died at last on his native soil penniless and heart-broken. To thousands of travellers floating down the Ohio River past Marietta and this lonely island, the deserted rendezvous of treason, has the pathetic tale of poor Blennerhassett been made familiar.

Nor, though released from legal durance, did the chief offender escape the Nemesis of public condemnation. Less an object of compassion than Blennerhassett, Burr wandered abroad a few years, living upon scanty remittances from personal friends; but in 1812 he returned stealthily to New York City, confirmed in sensual and impecunious habits, and there resided until his death. None of his former high acquaintances either molesting or greeting him, he slunk back into professional practice, confined for the rest of his life,

with all his astuteness, to the grade of a pettifogger. His only child, to whom he had promised a diadem, the beloved Theodosia, lost at sea, and his direct line extinct, Burr was left without an endearing tie in the world; yet a stoic still, through all the vicissitudes of life, he lived to the age of fourscore, the obscurity of his Bohemian existence varied only by the scandal of a marriage at seventy-eight to a rich widow, who soon after separated from him. Over the fair sex Burr's fascination was retained to the last; one woman, strange to his illustrious kindred, nursed him in his final sickness, and another placed a simple block of marble to mark his unhonored grave.

The historical act of this closing session of Congress (1806-7) was that which gave the African slave trade its quietus, our government thus availing itself of the right of constitutional prohibition upon the first permitted opportunity. Congress did much by shutting this outer door upon the slave trade; but, unfortunately, inner doors were still left open. Upon the great national error of this era regarding domestic slavery we have elsewhere dwelt: that the system already woven into the social fabric of the coast was permitted to become a pattern for the new interior States. Jefferson's accustomed prescience here failed him. Moved by the discontent which the French inhabitants of Orleans Territory manifested because of the present act, he thought it not unwise to let them receive slaves from the States; for, as he argued, by thus dividing the evil we lessen its danger. The law of natural increase contradicts such a theory; and the danger, growing with this Union, consisted most of all in fostering the ambition

of slaveholders to populate new States in their interest, and in allowing them to gain such an accession of wealth and power as to rivet their institution securely upon the broadening nation.

Properly viewed, the abolition of the foreign slave trade meant to England the consummation of a humane national policy, but to the United States scarcely more than its initiation. On both sides of the ocean, however, philanthropy now reposed upon its laurels; and with the abolition of the slave trade, a policy to which the United States, with Great Britain's co-operation, ever after adhered, which was favored presently by the commercial situation and in later years by more efficacious restraints, the first anti-slavery movement in America subsided. Of that movement the headquarters were at Philadelphia, and Pennsylvania had been the chief agitating State in the Union. The last State convert to emancipation had now been made, and upon no remaining issue which the slave problem presented in America could the general sentiment be strongly aroused or united. To limit slavery encroachment upon the national domain was not in this era attempted. The drab coats and yearly meetings fix no longer the public gaze; in 1807 the abolition convention at Philadelphia resolved to hold only triennial meetings in the future; and even those were presently discontinued as the societies died out which had supplied delegates.

Looking back through the vista of years upon that terrible encounter of war which shook the whole civilized world, we cannot but admire England's steadfast courage in opposing the great conqueror and autocrat

of the age. We see her beating him off from the ocean, and wheeling round the land in her solitary flight to spy out some spot on which she could alight to give battle; the talisman of royalty in her beak, and spell-bound, despairing sovereigns below. If not the world's last hope, the "fast-anchored isle" had, at all events, become the last bulwark of royal Europe, and but for British constancy the balance of power in the Old World would have been lost. The false glamour has now disappeared from the name of Napoleon. He was not the scourge of kings so much as the enemy of mankind. As liberty's vicegerent he glittered only by the insignia of which he had robbed her temple; the glory of his arms redounded not to his countrymen, not to France, but to his own imperial gratification; he overturned thrones, not like Attila in disdain of them, but in order that he might supplant legitimacy by illegitimacy, and pile costly pomp upon pomp. Against this consummate warrior and organizer of oppression England stood bravely, when all else was ruin. Corrupt, greedy, unscrupulous of means, she pushed, nevertheless, defiantly on. The younger Pitt himself, cold and haughty as he showed himself to America, and conscientious blunderer in his management of foreign relations, moves our compassion when we think of him crushed by Austerlitz, and dying of a broken heart, which refused to surrender. The iron of that character without its genius and virtue, but with a caustic humor which alleviated better the burdens of office, was in Canning, Pitt's disciple. But British antipathy to Napoleon did not originate in Napoleon's usurpations; it commenced with the Revolution that gave him the opportunities of greatness, with deep-seated national rivalries for which the Corsican could not be blamed.

As First Citizen of France Bonaparte's claims were indisputable; but England had challenged them, detesting French Republic and Empire alike. And hence the contest, ceasing and then recommencing with such violence that amity between the principals was impossible, affected America with peculiar sensations. We were a rock which each wished to hurl at the other,—a convenient missile, and no more. One principal was an old foe, the other a false friend; with neither's object had we really cause for active sympathy. Peace was our interest, and peace we sought sincerely. In pursuing one another, too, the contestants were like the genie and princess who practised magic; if one took the shape of a scorpion the other became a serpent, and woe to the spectator who advanced too near. The United States was bound by every instinct to stand aside from such a contention, to leave the dynasties of Europe to themselves, and maintain a just neutrality; to keep at once and forever detached from the politics and ambitions of the Old World. If forced from that position, reason and passion must have prompted a resistance on our part to that belligerent from whose inflictions we chiefly suffered. The measure of such resistance would naturally be the redress of our grievances, independently of such incidental advantage as the other belligerent might derive. Even the European sovereignties which were swallowed into this mad vortex, in which they struggled for dear life, found themselves swirling about in combination and recombination, catching now at a French alliance, now at an English. Into that vortex it was not fit that this republic should enter without the gravest necessity.

This trilogy of successive neutral prohibitions—the Berlin Decree, the British Orders in Council, and the

Milan Decree—must henceforth supply the situations which brought this country eventually upon the stage of the great European war. And the foreign policy of the United States for the next five years following the spring of 1807 turned upon the constant endeavor of this nation to make England or France, one or both, relax its unjust prohibitions, or else suffer the consequences of America's resentment.

Embargo must be contemplated as an experiment, somewhat like that of amputating a limb in order to save the life. The patient recognizes well what he has lost, but not the loss which was prevented. In this grave and sudden emergency the question for the United States was not whether to avoid or make a sacrifice, but whether one sacrifice might not be better borne, for the time being, than another. With belligerent decrees against us utterly reckless of our rights, diametrically opposed to one another, and universally operative, our neutral commerce must have been conducted between Scylla and Charybdis; if we carried for England, France would confiscate; if for France, England would confiscate. The one exacted tribute from us, like the Grand Turk, and insisted upon search; the other punished by forfeiture if we permitted search or paid that tribute; trade with the British Isles was under the ban of France, trade with France and her allies under the ban of Great Britain. King George, to be sure, had the more formidable navy to enforce such decrees, but Napoleon's means of punishment for noncompliance were ample, now that the Continent was in his coils. Further commerce abroad at this juncture meant, therefore, a defiant assertion of neutral rights, or

else such submission to one adversary as would certainly provoke the active resentment of the other, and draw us unwillingly from our normal state of neutrality; and, in either case, we risked the sacrifice of our commerce, together with the greater sacrifice of a war for which we were wholly unprepared.

But, it was asked, and not without relevancy, why not leave American commerce to solve the difficulty for itself? Why not let merchants arm their vessels or otherwise encounter the perils at their own discretion? To this the answer was, first, because a nation cannot safely or honorably commit the cause of all to the discretion of a class; next, because this government's responsibility to England and France, as well as to its own citizens, was not to be evaded for calamities which might occur should belligerent orders be disregarded and new penalties and new retaliations be invited; and, once again, for the reason that our merchants who wished to be let alone were less likely to maintain American rights and honor than to shuffle American trade into the protection of Great Britain, and accept an issue with her enemies. Here, as before, would government risk an immediate embroilment and war; chance, instead of policy, determining which belligerent should be our foe.

That zeal for one's country which we denominate patriotism, and which prompts the individual to sacrifice in order that the state may be served, sinks too often in our present age into the heartless calculation of material advantages which government protection affords to the individual, as though this were all that the individual need concern himself about. Under Jefferson our American commerce, whose chief seat was New England and New York, had enjoyed seven

years of unparalleled prosperity; but affluence had increased its cupidity. It was now protuberant, bulky, a mistress instead of a handmaid; a just pride, and yet a constant source of anxiety. It dragged a young people after it into foreign difficulties, with which they were unprepared to cope. It required a navy larger than the sense of the nation would warrant, and failing of this, got callous to British search and kidnapping, like a woman who seeks gain from some masculine profession while exposing herself to indignities from men. Neutral trade, moreover, from steering so long through the belligerent restrictions of Europe, had grown to be sly and cunning of late; finding subterfuges, risking captures, using the neutral flag to cover forbidden property, and constantly setting the wit of the fox to elude the lion. Embargo, as a protective measure, was not easily drawn about the vessels of such a mercantile community. First, the law was evaded boldly, so as to carry on an illicit trade despite its risks; next cautiously, so as to sell American ships to Britain and put American cargoes under the British flag. Embargo, in short, could only be maintained by force, and a forcible embargo for any considerable length of time meant rebellion at home for the sake of maintaining peace abroad.

As a purely temporary measure embargo was a fair choice among difficulties, nor a choice, in the present instance, wholly unforeseen. It gave our people time for reflection; it kept our vessels and cargoes from spoliation, with only the present sacrifice of profitable employment and an early market. The owners of perishable commodities like bread-stuffs suffered, to be sure, more than those whose lumber, tobacco, or rice might be readily stored and preserved; ships themselves

might rot, if long disused; and yet, on the whole, such a stoppage of trade, if brief, affected with no great partiality all classes and sections of the country. An embargo had been laid in 1793, while Washington was President, under the inducement of Eastern Federalists, and with a similar reliance upon the Executive discretion. And the present embargo received the general approbation of State legislatures upon its first adoption; it united public sentiment as no other measure would have done. But embargo, rightly considered, was no more than a temporary detention. Jefferson himself conceded it to be the universal opinion that war would be preferable to the long continuance of such an inhibition. This, he thought, was our last card, short of war; and unless a European peace soon ensued, or one of the powers repealed its obnoxious decrees, embargo was worse than war. He thought the time gained by it important, and undertook, on the strength of such a measure, to procure a retraction from either France or England. Embargo must have a limit, and in his mind the last limit would be the reassembling of Congress, or, perhaps, the close of 1808.

History must admit, that so far as embargo was used as a weapon for coercing Europe, it utterly disappointed expectation. The sacrifice required at home, in order to produce any positive impression abroad, proved of itself fatal in practice to the long endurance of any such experiment. If England bled, or France, under the operation, the United States bled faster. Jefferson miscalculated in supposing that the European struggle had nearly culminated, or that the nerveless Continental powers could organize an armed neutrality to protect substantially their own interests. Instead of a sinking, vacillating, debt-ridden England, he found a

stubborn England making capital of what it owed, its prodigious resources slowly uncoiling. He found a new ministry, hard as flint, with Parliament to brace it, bending with redoubled energies to the war, heedless of Liverpool remonstrances, marching the red-coats to break up meetings and suppress riots in Manchester and those other manufacturing towns where embargo and the Continental exclusion were most heavily felt. Next to making American commerce tributary to the British exchequer, the aim of those who framed the Orders in Council had been to drive it altogether from the ocean, so that British merchants might absorb the maritime trade once more to themselves. This latter alternative embargo directly favored. Our non-importation act, which had now gone into effect against Great Britain, made it still less an object for that country to court a repeal of the embargo. By way, too, of partial offset to the loss of our market, a new one was opened to England by the outbreaks in Spain. And as if to exasperate us to the utmost, Orders in Council were repealed as to that nation, but not in favor of the United States.

After all, in politics there are no positive maxims; or, rather, political maxims must yield to circumstances, and to the common sense of each new exigency. That common sense must be, in fine, the conserving force under a constitutional mechanism so complicated as ours. The fundamentals in which American political parties differ remain a standing source of perplexity to monarchies; and yet of those differences, whether reason or prejudice guides, we all partake. In one respect, at least, the majority of 1809 proved wiser than that of 1799; less obstinate and imperious when public opinion was pronounced, they quickly abandoned the

untenable, and made the sacrifice of pride much lighter by making it in good season.

The downfall of this forcible embargo we must attribute most of all to the panic which rebellious New England produced at Washington. "Eggs of sedition" was the angry epithet that Governor Lincoln bestowed upon the insubordinate town meetings of his own State. How the resolutions of those New England towns pelted and pattered upon the bewildered administration Jefferson never forgot.

Notwithstanding the embargo convulsion, loving and respectful tributes flowed in upon Jefferson at this time from every quarter of the Union except the Eastern; from State legislatures, and from religious and political societies. These tributes he severally acknowledged; but his only farewell address was embodied in the opening message to Congress, which he meant for his valedictory, feigning himself already, after a successor's election, at the end of a term for which he declined to be further responsible; a fiction which, unfortunately for the symmetry of our national system, no constitutional amendment has yet made a fact.

Undoubtedly this winter's trial was the sorest of Jefferson's life. His experiment failed, and with it hopes of peace and development he had dearly cherished. He had sunk in public estimation as the wizard, long infallible, who fails palpably at length to perform the expected miracle. Like the old Archbishop of Gil Blas, he was conscious and sensitive; he loved applause, and applause had confirmed him in his opinions. He left the cares of office in March, weary, disappointed, thoroughly glad to escape them.

But Jefferson was too much of a philosopher to take this last little vicissitude long to heart, too closely bound to his successors not to influence them, and too deeply rooted in the hearts of the people not to regain popularity the moment there was chance for another Presidential comparison. Randolph once likened this second term to Pharaoh's lean kine, which swallowed the fat ones; and yet, to correct the simile, it was nearly seven years of plenty to one of famine. But that year of famine was his last, and it is the final exit which gives glory to an administration, or denies it. In the five more years of misery which ensued, thousands learned to look back with fond regret upon the earlier prosperous era of peace and Jefferson; and so, too, onward through the hard years of recuperation which followed the inflated prosperity of an exhausting though successful war.

Spared for a long and healthful old age, in spite of increasing money anxieties—for he was not the least of personal sufferers by his own embargo policy—Jefferson aided the country and his successor, still, by his inspiration and counsel; but the firm, yet delicate, touch of his leadership was missed through the years of storm and stress which now followed. We were soon to be carried inevitably into the most stupendous international contest, and the most embarrassing, that modern civilization ever saw. Embargo, as Jefferson himself intended it, would have been the precursor of a hostile resistance to tyrannous European decrees; his own party failed him, however, and the opportunity passed for carrying that stringent precautionary measure to such a point. Though posterity is far from doing him

justice, in that singular experiment, it has struck away half the justification for the virulence of contemporary opponents, by conceding his thorough honesty of purpose. And with all the pecuniary pinch of distress that embargo occasioned, we were far better united, as a nation, in sentiment and resources, for immediate war and war preparations, than we found ourselves three years later. In shaping our course, as neutral between France and Great Britain, it was necessary that we should conform to new conditions, and shape and steer by the sequence of belligerent hostilities. It was not vacillation so much, that a Republican adminstration displayed in these difficult years, but rather a tacking about as the foreign winds shifted. Who will hold the helm to one point unswervingly, in so dread a crisis? And what ruler of an American people can be seriously reproached, who, before plunging into the dread calamities of war, is disposed to cast about, to experiment, to test to the utmost the expedients of peace and philanthropy?

On the pressing measures of the next sixteen years, and more especially through Madison's immediate Presidency, Jefferson, though in retirement, was a free and confidential counsellor. The relations, in fact, which bound together in perfect harmony Jefferson and Madison, through the last twenty-five years of public activity in their joint lives, is without a parallel in popular government; so well fitted by differences of age, talent, experience, and temperament, was the one to direct and the other to follow gracefully; Jefferson with pen or voice tingeing each expression with the deep feeling which glowed within him; while Madison

showed a sobriety of manner, with occasionally a sly and quiet humor, shrank from all personalities, and linked calm premises to conclusions, as though human passions would bend implicitly to reason. The one welcomed, no doubt, the restraints of judicious counsel, and the other that invigoration which comes in glowing moments from prophetic and confident intuition.

America's greatest civilian, for the rest of his life,—an honor which John Adams deserved to share with him more fully than his fellow-citizens cared to permit,—Jefferson in his final retirement corresponded with the greatest citizens of two hemispheres; and years after he had left official station Monticello, his home, was overrun with pilgrims, from the illustrious to the impertinent. In the latest years of his life he devoted himself earnestly to the work of higher education in his native State and neighborhood. The University of Virginia, "the darling child" of Jefferson's old age, was the fruition of schemes early cherished; and in the epitaph which he drew up for his own monument, "Father" of this University was the third of the great titles which he claimed from posterity. In that last and most solemn appeal for fame and recognition, one may perceive that Jefferson's most enduring pride was not in political or party triumphs, nor in the honors of public station, nor even in that supreme of our political titles, President of the United States, but in the calmer authorship of great works for the general benefit of posterity and his fellow-men.

It would be strange, indeed, if statesmen so intellectual and penetrating as the foremost among Jefferson's political adversaries should not have marked correctly the chief blemishes of his character. Blemishes there doubtless were. As connected with our national

history and that of great political parties, however, he is set, like a box within a box, by the sequence of events, showing the worse exterior first. We see him a pessimist out of authority; then an optimist in the plenitude of authority; pulling down the great in the former instance, in order that the humble might rise to their share of public influence, but in the latter mainly occupied with solving those benevolent human problems which the success of such a plan next forced upon him. Hence he seemed interested and pushing at one time, but singularly disinterested and high-minded at another. He had seen his political opportunity, organized his forces, and risen; but motive power consisted in the expansive force of the ideas with which he had put himself in sympathy, like that which sets a steam engine to work. While leader of a party on the aggressive, seeking the stronghold of power, Jefferson was wily, insinuating, supple, ready in resources, one who studied the weaknesses of opponents to profit by them, and who, in cultivating the common votes for his side, assiduously, but not meanly, displayed the art in which they were most deficient; in short, a man of management and persuasion. Over a patrician party he gave plebeians an advantage at the polls, which no change of party names and issues has ever reversed. And though, as chief magistrate, giving himself unreservedly and with remarkable success to inspiring the widest confidence, so that Republicanism might stand for the whole American people, Jefferson was ever after cumbered by his own peculiar methods, which, tried upon the great European powers afterwards, resulted in the best diplomatic conquest and the worst diplomatic defeat of his eight years' administration. Jefferson's faults of character: dissimulation, intrigue, adroit management, a cer-

tain art of drawing the chair from under a foe instead of striking him down, and a disposition to exonerate himself from blame under all circumstances, and even though employing others to detract, the careful reader has already detected. In political methods he showed more of the French than the English school,—plausible and diplomatic, instead of curt and offensive. But he was sound in native faith; sincere and attached with regard to all followers; remarkably tolerant except towards such as had provoked his revenge, and those he spared not on opportunity. His innermost wish was to be friends with all, friend of the people, and the love of popularity disposed him to temporize. He was an idealist, but enough of a statesman besides to understand that mankind are won more by facts than theories. In general direction he never swerved; he led by flights, drawing the multitude after him, not soaring as the lark above them. To such a statesman the best attainable for the times is the best; he errs with his age, but he advances it.

Contemporaries charged Jefferson with being pusillanimous, and asserted that his talent was a knack of shunning danger. For assault and battery, for organizing brute force, for facing bullets, and trampling carelessly through carnage, this sensitive and sympathetic nature was doubtless ill adapted; but as for the fibre of moral courage, the Declaration and '76 speak to all time. The man who challenged his king in youth, and risked with compatriots a traitor's doom, endured contumely through the political excitements of 1799 without flinching. In the Barbary war, in the suppression of Burr's conspiracy, in the assertion of American rights against foreign powers,—nay, in embargo itself, —he showed himself a strong Executive, constant and

firm. Yet we shall admit that for marshalling a nation in battle array Jefferson compared unfavorably with Washington, or even, perhaps, with Adams. He had not the military instinct. He could arouse but not lead to action. He clung to persuasion and philosophy. War leaders may carry discipline into the cabinet, but peace leaders find their philanthropy out of place in the camp. There is something pathetic in the tenacity with which Jefferson for years pursued his futile expedient of conquering without showing fight or warlike resources; determined not to yield to foreign injustice, but ruined in private estate partly because of the course he took to withstand it.

Jefferson's original character has most powerfully contributed in forming that of his country. Liberal education, liberal politics, liberal religion; a free press; America for Americans; faith in the simple arts of peace, in science and material progress, in popular rule, in honesty, in government economies; no king, no caste, room for the oppressed of all climes; hostility to monopolies, the divorce of government from banks, from pet corporations, and from every form of paternalism; foreign friendship and intercourse without foreign alliances; the gradual propagation of republican ideas on this western hemisphere while gently forcing Europe out; meagre force establishments, meagre preparations for war in time of peace, a leaning toward militia and State volunteers for defence in emergencies rather than dependence upon national troops and prætorian guards; faith in the indefinite expansion of this Union and of the practice of self-government upon this continent: all this, though others inculcated some of these maxims

too, is Jeffersonism,—for Jefferson's inspiration propagated the faith,—and Jeffersonism is modern America.* The States as a reliance against central consolidation American experience approves; and only in the sentiment of nationality and stronger national establishments has the Union outgrown Jefferson, or rather the Jefferson of 1799. Jefferson had the enthusiasm of the future, and knew how to communicate it. Ideas impress most forcibly through the individual who stands for them; and in Jefferson was personified, for the first time, the American idea in its full and confident expression against prejudice, against timid conservatism, against historical experience, the cherished traditions of Europe, the French Revolution, and the armed potentates of the world.

Jefferson, therefore, though no warrior, had the highest essentials of a philosophic statesman,—lofty conviction, earnestness of conviction, endurance of conviction, skill in impressing his conviction. The candid, who differ from him, allow the broad philanthropy of his policy; they allow it in spite of visions and fallacies, and although pacified Indians might raise the tomahawk once more or peacemakers shoulder the musket. He truly worked to deserve the good will of mankind by doing mankind good. Peace, not pride, was the fundamental of his system; the less of government the better; live and let live; trust the good of man's nature

* The germ of the "Monroe doctrine" of later development is thus early seen in Jefferson's corespondence, in view of the Spanish uprising against Bonaparte, and its possible effects upon Cuba and Mexico, which he is well satisfied to leave in their present dependence. "We consider their interests and ours as the same, and that the object of both must be to exclude all European influence in this hemisphere." Jefferson's Works, October 29, 1808.

rather than repress the evil; give the freest possible impulse to the bounding spirit of liberty, and confide in popular tendencies, as at least the most likely to be honest.

One striking trait in Jefferson was his serenity of temper. He believed little could be gained by angry discussion. He was no orator; he seldom committed himself passionately to paper, though always feelingly; but in conversation and personal intercourse his good humor was contagious. He would turn from politics to science and the crops, and while perplexed to the utmost in the embargo summer of 1808 he was corresponding with his friends upon the beauties of the French metrical system. "I have never," he truly said, "suffered political opinion to affect my private friendships; some have deserted me on this account, but I do not desert others."

To confirm this last remark two memorable instances are in point, which, dating near Jefferson's retirement from office, may here be mentioned. The impetuous but chivalric Monroe, who had been distanced for the Presidency by a neighbor and fellow-Virginian, less popular, perhaps, but more deserving, betrayed for the moment anger, not with the latter alone, but with their common chief; but Jefferson, who might well have rebuked, soothed him like an affectionate father, persuading him of his own firm friendship, and thus gradually brought about that full concert and reconciliation between Monroe and Madison which became so auspicious to the nation and to the permanent welfare of each. And once again, by laying hold of opportunities, while in and out of office, Jefferson rescued the perishing fellowship of his life-long friend, John Adams; so that the country long enjoyed the glad spec-

tacle of their two surviving ex-Presidents and Revolutionary sages united in brotherly ties and in the substantial support of their next successor's policy throughout a most perilous national era. An intimacy of great and patriotic souls more touching was never seen. Hand in hand these gray-haired sires of '76 went down the declivity of life together, discoursing as they grew old of things past and to come, this world and the next; and through those dread gates which never swing backward they passed out into broad eternity, lit, as they vanished, by the rays of the same independence sun.

CHAPTER VII.

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA IN 1809.

NEVER in modern times had government come to exert such positive influence with so little of coercion as in this republic of the United States during the latter part of Jefferson's administration, and immediately preceding the Embargo. Those are happy years to look back upon, happiest perhaps in the educational aspect they afford and in a conscious broadening of the national spirit. A parting radiance, indeed, lingers about this second administration of Jefferson, to be remembered like that of the last sunset before a storm at sea; it was a miniature golden age of American history.

What, Europe might have asked, was this ambitious young neutral across the seas, confident through inexperience, which had so boldly seized the carrying trade and now demanded the right to prosper by it, enforcing its argument with neither bribes and obeisance on the one hand, nor fleets and armies on the other, but as if to persuade the jealous to be just? To answer such an inquiry, let us suspend our historical narrative for a single chapter.

The uniform tendency of political government in these United States has been that the legislature absorbs the chief functions, and encroaches upon the

other departments. Corruption and fitfulness are the great dangers to which an American legislature is exposed; its organized capacity for good or evil makes individuals ambitious to control it for their private ends; and hence, fittingly, the constitutional requirement in all the States at this early period, except Vermont, that the legislature should consist of two houses; a provision which, to Pennsylvania and Georgia, was the fruit of experience, and which Vermont likewise adopted after a time. But as between these two houses no such solid basis of distinction could be contrived as gave symmetry to the British Parliament and the American Congress. They who sought to make the smaller house represent aristocracy, land, or wealth, found the idea too unpopular to prevail long; and, accordingly, our State legislature, with its two branches, now stood for little more than a double friction upon law-making, the component of popular constituencies, one larger, the other smaller, with, perhaps, a difference in modes of choice or the length of the term of membership. A few local attempts were not wanting to base the Senate apportionment according to the yield of taxation, and the House according to numbers. The New England plan of electing senators by counties, and representatives by towns, at this time prevalent, made, perhaps, the soundest distinction practicable; but even that distinction has since been generally abandoned.

As for the right of popular suffrage in the choice of executive or legislature, this had by no means been freely conceded in America as early as 1809; while the fundamental idea of the Federal Constitution was to abide by the discretion of the several States in this respect so far as national elections were concerned. They who claim that "taxation without representation"

was the political wrong of the mother country against which the American Colonies rebelled, are in error if by this they intend that an individual or thoroughly popular representation was sought in Parliament, and not rather the representation of colonies or whole communities by some convenient sort of delegation. Unless Massachusetts as a colony was represented in laying the tax, Massachusetts as a colony ought not to be taxed; but that no one in Massachusetts should be taxed unless he had a voice in electing such a representative would have been thought an absurd claim in 1775. Rather, perhaps, should it be said that these colonies claimed the exclusive right of levying their own local taxes through their own local legislatures. The essential principle of deputy representation, however, such as prevailed in our own Continental Congress, and was claimed from Parliament as a fundamental right of British colonists liable to taxation, is as old at least as the Amphictyonic Council; whereas popular representation, or that conferred by poll suffrage, is wholly modern, and to this day finds certain limitations imposed of sex, age, and condition. State legislatures chose their annual deputies to the Continental Congress; the Continental Congress made requisitions upon the State, and apportioned the several contributions. Much farther removed from universal suffrage and mathematical representation, we may furthermore well conceive, was the first quarter of this century than the fourth. As for Great Britain at this time, none of whose colonies could ever be regarded as on a par with the home population, rotten boroughs ruled the House of Commons. The French legislative corps was but an emperor's echo, like the senate of the Cæsars. Our American States had, perhaps, the purest representa-

tive systems in the world, both in theory and practice; and yet poll suffrage, a democratic idea, was coming very slowly into favor; the older constitutions conferred the franchise on property alone, many of them adhering furthermore to the British idea that only landholders should vote. In South Carolina a peculiar arrangement of election districts gave the wealthy and aristocratic the decided preponderance; in scarcely more than one-third of the States, and these chiefly the new ones, all agricultural in interests, had the property qualification been so far sunk that manhood suffrage really prevailed; though in that direction, no doubt, was the sweep of the general current.

Two salutary constraints upon legislative tyranny under this American system were the veto power and the limitations of a written constitution. By means of the former, an executive, State or National, could defeat any new law upon which two-thirds of both houses (or, under some State charters, a majority in each house of all the members elected), failed to unite against him; under the latter the proper court of appeal might thwart by the machinery of justice any act which contravened in its solemn opinion the body of fundamental law. Political controversies and infringements, State and Federal, might hence cause courts of differing jurisdictions to collide with legislature or Congress or with one another; but should blind judges encroach thus upon popular liberty, these were likely to suffer in the end, so resolute was the popular will. Strange and abstruse as all these constitutional inquiries might seem to a British barrister, whose Parliament, it was said, could do anything except to make a woman

a man, or a man a woman, the British courts, favored by the greater ponderosity of legislative machinery, by their own independence, and the general respect Englishmen entertain for unwritten law, built up a jurisprudence of precedents in this era more boldly than could have been possible under the American system, where all power was subdivided and the public vigilance incessant. For American courts expounded statutes and considered their constitutionality, from a State or a Federal point of view, while British courts moulded national statutes by construing them at pleasure.

Our State constitutions, republican in form and essence, breathed humane sentiments, expressed in the so-called Bill of Rights, which made a feature of each fundamental charter from the days of the Revolution. Whether the language were always adequate or not, the ideas thus inculcated have crystallized into an American creed; the Federal Constitution with its earlier amendments copying from the older States, the younger States copying from both; and some of the phrases originating in the British Bill of Rights of 1689. Freedom of the press was enjoined; freedom of religion, freedom of the person, immunity from arbitrary search and arrest, the sanctity of trial by jury; excessive bail was prohibited, all punishments disproportioned to the offence, standing armies, bribery, hereditary and perhaps double offices, titles of nobility, civil pensions, confiscations and penalties entailed upon innocent offspring. States differed, however, in some of the lesser details. The Roman idea of censorship and the Jewish of a seventh year of jubilee, might be traced in some of our local charters, notably that of

Vermont, which favored the plan of revising the State constitution every seven years; but the later rule in the States conforms more closely to that of the Federal Constitution, so as to permit rather of special constitutional amendments or a constitutional convention whenever it may seem desirable to alter the fundamental law.

Freedom of the individual, a gift which the most polished nations of antiquity failed to confer upon their citizens, and which in the highest type only a spirit of Christianity supplies, was the essential spirit of the American constitutions. The Grecian and Roman citizen lived for the State, the American State lives for the citizen.

By far the greatest interest of these United States in 1809, with respect to the number of inhabitants engaged, was the agricultural; a circumstance which doubtless enhanced Jefferson's popularity, when others assailed him as an enemy of commerce for agriculture's sake. Our chief exports were agricultural, according to the best estimates; while as concerned the necessaries of life the American people were essentially self-supporting. Cotton, so insignificant a product in 1791, was king already, while the world's market stood open; the crop exported in 1810 being worth over $15,000,000, and South Carolina finding this her most valuable export.

The manufacturing industries of the United States had steadily grown, and so far as the imperfect statistics of the period are trustworthy we may reckon the manufactures of wood and leather as the most adequate of all, at this time, to domestic consumption.

These, however, were exceeded presently in value by manufactures of cotton and wool, which received an immense stimulus by those disturbances which about this time checked their British importation. Iron manufactures constituted the next great industry in importance after these others. Of wood and leather manufactures our imports had become less valuable than the exports; carriages, household furniture, and the great item of ship-building being included under the former head. The history of American cotton culture and of the cotton-mills is deeply interwoven with the American politics of this nineteenth century. Its narrative commences somewhat farther back and almost simultaneously with that of our constitutional Union.

American commerce, as our narrative has shown, rose to such prosperity during the European war as to have excited already the jealousy of the contending powers, whose restrictions Congress had to meet by corresponding measures of retaliation, which led ultimately to war with Great Britain. New England was, of course, the great maritime section; more than one-third of the entire tonnage of the Union belonged to Massachusetts alone; and in Boston, the chief emporium of commerce, signs of luxury appeared already in an increasing taste for comfort and the fine arts. New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore were busy seaports. Of the coasting trade New England's share was large; and the toilsome sons of Nantucket and Marblehead, foremost in the ocean fisheries, caught cod off the Grand Bank or pursued the shy whale to distant oceans.

The whale fishery was a sort of speculation; and in view of French and British decrees against neutral trade, our whole foreign trade by the seas was

taking on the same hue. Great ventures, great risks, for the sake of great profits, is in fact the national American tendency in business as compared with the colonial; so sanguine is the American temperament under its liberal conditions of life and so eager are all to get rich quickly and rise in the world. Upon this vulgar development, landed capitalists of the Washington and Jefferson type, who clung to old-fashioned integrity and simplicity of manners, and had been brought up as easy farmers, looked with mingled disdain and alarm. The funding system first plunged our people in extensive speculations, which shook all the chief centres of population; but the land mania afterwards produced still greater convulsions. The feverish zeal with which waste tracts were bought and sold in the United States towards the close of the eighteenth century seemed a strange spectacle to foreigners; and ere this its worst symptoms had disappeared through the modifications of government policy in transfers of the public domain, and the bitter lessons of personal experience. The manufacturing frenzy was next to come, as incidental, however, to the development of a vast legitimate enterprise, in which native capital became interested of necessity; and this broke out about 1810 in the Middle States, spreading westward to Ohio and Kentucky, and southward to Maryland and Virginia. Solidly as New England and Pennsylvania manufacturers had supported one another during the period of our first Congress, in order that their moderate business might be protected, they had since drawn apart; the commercial interest became decidedly paramount at the East, and latterly Massachusetts appears to have allowed both Pennsylvania and New York to outdistance her, until, this European

trade inevitably declining, her adventurous sons at length took the same infection, diverted their capital into the new channels, and made Massachusetts very speedily in some respects the most remarkable of manufacturing States. When the leading Eastern interests thus changed, we shall find that Eastern politics changed also.

The love of novelty and change is inseparable from such a government. A new custom is quickly stereotyped into law before the old one has proved outworn. Men are prone to consider the latest the best; their own age superior to all preceding, and the constant tendency of all things to perfection; truths by no means evident, if history teaches anything. On the contrary, the generation which gains in one point may lose in others. This Jefferson era, by no means the age of luxurious or material perfection, was a happy one, notwithstanding, in setting the high opportunities of acquisition before all; and the American people were blessed at this age in reaching out towards the golden mean of prosperity while stimulated to still greater exertion.

CHAPTER VIII.

FIRST ADMINISTRATION OF JAMES MADISON.

§ I. Period of Eleventh Congress. March 4, 1809-March 3, 1811. —§ II. Period of Twelfth Congress. March 4, 1811-March 3, 1813.

PARALYTIC and dastardly as the new foreign policy which Congress now dictated might appear, it fitted the emergency of present events better, perhaps, than a bold one would have done. At home and throughout the United States it deepened the conviction that a Republican administration was sincerely impartial in sentiment as between the two belligerents, England and France. With all their inaptitude for war or ambitious enterprise the Jefferson leaders certainly carried the hearts and hopes of the American people; they might trail the national standard, but it was in their sure keeping. Centralizers in theory, the Federalists, who still claimed the name of national statesmen, were growing to be disintegrators in fact; for they clung too closely to traditions and to the inexpansive Union of the Old Thirteen. More positive, also, in pride of intellect, their tendency was now too much to non-resistance, or for resistance on England's side, to suit the temper of the times; for Americans evidently regarded England as the chief European aggressor, and only showed a

1810.

better fighting spirit than fighting capacity. The Republican party, on the other hand, which, partly in self-defence, had begun by unduly exalting State rights, was now, through its closer and steadier sympathy with the nation's practical development, and by reason of the gradual decline of all European bias, acquiring the more decided national character. That party alone kept headway in the new States, and with the backwoods settlers, who furnished to fastidious statesmen of the old school and of States long since populated, the semblance of a Tartar population; and whose utter want of affiliation with Federalism in return, gave positive assurance that the old party could never rise to national predominance again.

The repeal of our Non-intercourse Act had yet to produce its effect upon Europe; and, strange to say, when it became known, the ignoble statute of 1810, by which Congress seemed to surrender neutral rights at discretion, accomplished, with reference to the belligerents, what firmer measures had sought in vain. Ceasing to balance justly between England and France, the neutral now dropped into the arms of the former, coquettishly hinting that the latter might recall her. That hint was not lost upon the quick Napoleon.

Madison and his Cabinet, knowing only the Cadore letter, accepted the French assurance in good faith, as they were justified in doing. For, at a certain point in public intercourse, either the word of a potentate must be taken as a pledge, or international law has no security at all. Any relief, moreover, from this aimless and imbecile drift of foreign relations was to be welcomed. It remained, therefore, for Madison's gov-

Vernment to summon Great Britain to repeal her own edicts against neutral commerce within three months, as the act provided, or else to suffer non-intercourse to revive against her alone. Here was the turning-point in American relations. Our administration wanted no war, but to escape an intolerable dilemma, and have but one enemy at a time. But Napoleon's deceitful pretensions were less of a barrier to confidence than the blunt and contemptuous incivility of the British ministry. No flattering ambiguities were furnished in that quarter. Neither the equal opportunities which the act of May offered, nor the imminent revival of our non-importation restraints under Bonaparte's protection, moved the Perceval Cabinet. They had made no independent offer to repeal injurious decrees. They did not thwart Napoleon's new designs by recalling Orders in Council, even with the reservation they might properly have employed that his revocation of decrees should be honestly fulfilled; a course of procedure which would have rescued England's honor and our own, and held the Emperor by a double pledge. They did not interrogate for themselves whether the Cadore announcement, which appeared final and positive enough upon its face, so as to deprive Great Britain of plausible ground for maintaining longer the present neutral system, was a snare and delusion. But taunting the Emperor to the utmost, they assumed that before England need move a hair's-breadth the United States were bound to extort a continuous performance of Napoleon's undertaking for some indefinite period; all this in fundamental disregard of that legislation upon which the Emperor himself had relied, and by whose tenor a genuine revocation was the essential fact; and, in a word, so as to require us to impeach Napoleon's veracity to his face,

and confess that King George and not he could be trusted.

Three days before the Tippecanoe battle was fought, whose tidings reached Washington early in December, the Twelfth Congress was seen assembling, 1811. November 4. in obedience to the President's proclamation, a month before the usual time. That proclamation was ominous of war, but still more so were the changes which the growing war sentiment of a year had wrought in the composition of that body.

The most remarkable change of all was seen in the new tone of Republicanism in Congress and the new leadership of the party. As for the House, which fixed the public gaze more constantly, moderate, non-resistant Republicans had disappeared, and the war-hawks were now in the ascendant. Jefferson and peace were already reckoned with the past; even Madison and Gallatin might soon be transferred to the retired list. Young America now found expression in that popular body. States of later date than the Convention of 1787 demanded war; and ardent men, who were babes when the Revolution was fought, pushed boldly to the front and assumed command.

That the House had passed out of the control of temporizers and the Old Thirteen was revealed on the first ballot for Speaker, when Henry Clay received 75 votes against 38 for William W. Bibb, of Georgia, the peace candidate, and 3 scattering votes for Macon. "Who is Clay?" asked the country, confusing the Speaker thus selected with a Virginia member of that name; and the press responded that he was a new man, of talents and eloquence, quite popular, who appeared

to preside impartially. So much for a three years' record at this epoch in the United States Senate, where owl-like seniority blinked down impetuous youth, until the young men now and presently appearing in the House became transferred thither, and made it at a later epoch the great arena of national debate. Henry Clay had served in the Senate in Burr's day for a short period, and then, returning after a long absence, in 1810, to fill a vacancy, he had recently made himself conspicuous by espousing protective measures, and helping destroy the National Bank. He was one who, produced amid adverse surroundings in an old State, gained richness of growth by being early transplanted; a Virginian by birth, the son of a Baptist clergyman, and left an orphan and destitute in infancy. The bright mill-boy of the "Slashes" gained the first rudiments of learning from a rude district school, worked his way to the bar as a clerical drudge, and then, removing from Richmond to the new State of Kentucky, rose rapidly in fame as a criminal lawyer, and thence came naturally into public life on a broadening arena. Rashly confident, perhaps, in youth, Clay had a capacious intellect, and learned greatly and gradually by experience; he combined, moreover, the generous honor of the Old Dominion with the Western dash and faith in a boundless national development. The secret of his power lay, however, in the inherited gift of persuading others, in his mastery of the American heart, which he swayed while swaying with it: first, by his eloquence, full of bold imagery, whose vehemence shamed the timid and roused the vigorous; next, by a skilful management of men with different proclivities, whom he drew together by a thrill of personal sympathy. It was an art that he constantly cultivated to remember faces he had once

met, and recall each name. A free liver, he would play cards and sport far into the night, reading thus the hearts of his compeers, while statesmen abstemious and industrious, like the younger Adams, measured out their slumbers in order to be up with the morrow's sun and kindle the study fire. Clay's oratory may have burned out with the inspiring occasion; his legislative compromises may have poulticed more irritations than they healed; but as a representative of national ideas and national self-assertion against Europe, as statesman, legislator, negotiator, Clay now became for forty years a remarkable figure in American politics. His accession to the Speakership was of itself a conspicuous event. Feeble hesitancy lost its cling on current events. From the moment this tall, slender son of Kentucky, with long brown hair, blue and flashing eyes, large mouth, peaked nose, and shaved face, mounted the steps and took the gavel into his hand, Quincy and Randolph had a foeman worthy of them; this House of Congress the popular leader whom two Presidents had sought in vain; and the country a foreign policy the most spirited and inspiring, if not the wisest.

It was Calhoun's response to Randolph which produced the chief effect in debate, because of a striking contrast in the matter of his remarks and a persuasive and dignified manner of utterance. This grave and handsome youth showed in his maiden speech before Congress, when scarcely thirty, that mastery of subtle and captivating logic, that ingenuity in presenting statements and that generalizing disposition, which instated him in after years as the founder of a new political school. Here he laid it down as a fair principle of conduct, applicable to nations as to individuals, to

repel a first insult, and thus command the respect, if not the fear, of the assailant. War, should it ensue, was in the present case justifiable and necessary. "The extent, duration, and character of the injuries received," he continued, "the failure of those peaceable means heretofore resorted to for the redress of our wrongs, is my proof that it is necessary. Why should I mention the impressment of our seamen; depredations on every branch of our commerce, including the direct export trade, continued for years, and made under laws which professedly undertake to regulate our trade with other nations; negotiation resorted to time after time till it became hopeless; the restrictive systems persisted in to avoid war and in the vain expectation of returning justice? The evil still grows, and in each succeeding year swells in extent and pretension beyond the preceding. The question, even in the opinion and admission of our opponents, is reduced to this single point: which shall we do, abandon or defend our own commercial and maritime rights and the personal liberties of our citizens in exercising them? These rights are essentially attacked, and war is the only means of redress. The gentleman from Virginia has suggested none, unless we consider the whole of his speech as recommending patient and resigned submission as the best remedy. Sir, which alternative this House ought to sustain is not for me to say. I hope the decision is made already by a higher authority than the voice of any man. It is not for the human tongue to instil the sense of independence and honor. This is the work of nature,—a generous nature that disdains tame submission to wrongs. This part of the subject is so imposing as to enforce silence even on the gentle-

man from Virginia. He dared not deny his country's wrongs or vindicate the conduct of her enemy."

All things hurried now so rapidly to war that the President had either to lead or be left behind. Amiable though he was and a skilful tactician, and earnest, too, in dealing with these formidable difficulties which neither France nor England would make lighter, Madison had not the energy and decision requisite either for inspiring or sustaining the public at this grave crisis. The imperious majority in the House grew impatient while he vacillated. His Cabinet, on the whole, was more prudent than daring.

The war party in Congress, with Clay at their head, and popular enthusiasm cheering them on, resolved to bring the Executive to the point. The time approached for nominating the next President in caucus. They laid the anti-British programme they had arranged before Madison and his Cabinet. This programme contemplated a short embargo to be followed by war. It is related that Madison acceded to the plan, or rather pledged himself to recommend war, for the sake of securing his renomination at their hands, their threat being that unless he did so they should drop him. But all that history can positively assert is that Madison pursued such a programme, step by step, and that no nominating caucus was held until he had quite committed himself. Prudent as an administrator, pacific and just on general principles, conscious of our inadequate resources, and most of all distrusting Napoleon's good faith and resenting the failure of that belligerent warrior to give the United States some explicit assurance

which would have put Great Britain so clearly in the wrong, that we might confidently call upon her to repeal or fight, Madison had kept the contingency of war all the time in view, and was not disposed to take more than his share of responsibility to prevent it.

"Rushing headlong into difficulties, with little calculation of the means, and little concern for the consequences." This was the harshest censure to which the administration and Congress had justly exposed themselves by embarking in the present contest against Great Britain. All other strictures made by the peace men of that day may be dismissed as unworthy of the rhetorical phrasing they employed. The United States may or may not have been duped into a war with England, but the provocation was strong, and war or dishonorable submission was the only visible alternative which Britain had left us. Napoleon was but the finger-post in this business,—no ally whatever. War we chose with England because it was needful to choose one of the alternatives, and either choice bristled with objections. Peace and free commerce were desirable, but the two could not be had together. Modest retirement from the ocean or a war of commercial restraints, the peace men themselves would not submit to. Open and violent war, therefore, was undertaken; rashly, we cannot doubt, and over-confidently, and yet honestly, and, as events turned out, by no means disastrously to the national character. There could not be a war for our maritime and neutral rights without, in some sense, an offensive war.

Want of sectional unanimity, however, was the first and almost a decisive obstacle to this contest. Pennsylvania, and the States south and west, earnestly supported it, while New England, New York, New Jersey,

and Delaware rather held back. The instinct of honor and self-preservation should unite citizens to arm for their country alike when once the resolve is taken. Not thus, however, was Federalism prepared to reason. Pride, prejudice, inflexibility of temper, bitterly disappointed ambition, the patriotism of State lines, held these Federal Catos together. Not disunionists, necessarily, such leaders seemed to prefer the worst calamity to the Union rather than they should turn out false prophets.

After the war against England had fully begun, news arrived that the British ministry had decided to suspend the Orders in Council; but hostilities continued as before between the belligerents. 1813. January. When Congress reassembled a debate arose in the House in consequence, and Quincy, of the opposition, bitterly arraigned the administration while opposing all further military outlay.

In a speech, one of the most eloquent he ever made in his life, Henry Clay, the Speaker of the House, vindicated the Cabinet and administration party and justified the existing war. Reviewing the inconsistencies of an opposition band whose voice was first for war and no restrictions while the administration sought peace, and next for peace and restrictions when the administration was for war,—of parasites throwing out the idea of French influence, "which is known to be false, and which ought to be met in one manner only, namely, by the lie direct,"—Clay proceeded to consider the circumstances under which the government had felt compelled to declare war, and the motives which still remained for pursuing it. The British repeal, or rather,

suspension of Orders in Council coming so late, it does not follow that that which would, in the first instance, have prevented, would also terminate a war. "As to myself," observed the speaker, "I have no hesitation in saying that I have always considered the impressment of American seamen as much the most serious aggression."

That which gave the Promethean fire to our war with Great Britain was not, history must admit, its first most prominent issue; and here Clay showed the profound statesman and orator by lighting with his logic the most moving cause of all, that which had been too long subordinated, and by stimulating the national pride and indignation against the foreign power which, in this respect, was, and always had been, America's sole aggressor. "If Great Britain," exclaimed Clay, "desires a mark by which she can know her own subjects, let her give them an ear mark. The colors that float from the masthead should be the credentials of our seamen." And with a thrilling pathos, of which this orator's words, apart from his action, can afford but a faint impression, he pictured the piteous condition of the American sailor who had fought his country's battles, pining in the oppressor's prison, while his government pleaded excuses for leaving him there.*

This eloquent speech revived the drooping spirits of the country. The war went on, and the needful war measures were pushed briskly forward.

*Newspapers of the time record the wonderful effect produced on Clay's listeners by this pathetic description. The day was a cold one, but the audience left the Capitol with beating hearts. Niles's Register; Washington Intelligencer, etc.

CHAPTER IX.

SECOND ADMINISTRATION OF JAMES MADISON.

§ I. Period of Thirteenth Congress. March 4, 1813-March 3, 1815.—§ II. Period of Fourteenth Congress. March 4, 1815-March 3, 1817.

ASSEMBLING amid rumors of treason and the execration of all the country west of the Hudson, its members watched by an army officer who had been conveniently stationed in the vicinity, the Hartford Convention, hardening into stone, preserves for all ages a sphinx-like mystery.

The labors of this convention, whatever they were, ended with a report and resolutions, signed by the delegates present, and adopted on the day before final adjournment. These were promulgated without explanatory comment. Report and resolutions disappointed, doubtless, both citizens who had wished a new declaration of independence, and citizens who had feared it. Constitutional amendments were here proposed, which, not utterly objectionable under other circumstances, must have been deemed at this time an insult to those officially responsible for the national safety, and only admissible as a humiliation of the majority. It requires but little imagination to read, in report and resolutions, a menace to the Union in its hour of tribulation, a demand for the purse and sword, to which only a craven Congress could have yielded, and a threat of local armies which, with the avowed purpose of mutual

December 15, 1814-January 5, 1815.

aid, might in some not remote contingency be turned against foes American not less than British.

Was this political strategy in order to teach the American nation to look up to Federalism as the brazen serpent, or was it New England's serious ultimatum to her sister States? From whichever point it should be regarded, never did amiable, upright gentlemen of the bar fail more ignominiously as confidential advisers of a rebellion. An uprising of shipping merchants, clergy, and moneyed men, of the conservative forces of society against the aspiring, could scarcely have been heroic or popular; and the conventionists, moreover, had duly estimated neither the wariness of governments abroad, nor the reserved strength of our own. Before the Congress, now in session, had actually resorted to a conscription, before new and burdensome taxes could be assessed or a national bank chartered, and while the novel experiment of enrolling State volunteers promised all the troops immediately desired, the war-cloud suddenly parted. Massachusetts and Connecticut had accepted the report of the Hartford Convention and made the measures thus proposed their own. Each State quickly dispatched commissioners to Washington, accordingly, to make upon Congress the demand for a separate maintenance. Quickly, indeed, but too late. Those demands were never made; for before the State commissioners could reach the national capital, salutes were firing and the stars and stripes floated free. The vast area of our indivisible Union was becoming spangled by night with illuminations. Almost simultaneously came the good news to Washington that Jackson had driven the British from New Orleans, and that our commissioners abroad had concluded an honorable

February 11–18.

peace at Ghent on the 24th of December. Peace, welcome peace, had returned; a peace welcomed in the arms of victory.

All was exuberance of joy in the last weeks of this Congressional session. Debatable measures were laid aside, as the new aspect of affairs permitted. Military operations were declared suspended. All calls for additional troops were countermanded; the militia being discharged as speedily as possible, and the State volunteer act likewise repealed. Deferring Dallas's bank scheme, Congress provided for the immediate wants of the treasury by a temporary loan and a new issue of treasury notes. In token, moreover, of reconciliation and renewed commerce, the offending remnants of our discrimination and non-intercourse system, now harmless enough, were cleared away by an act of final repeal. In the midst of this happy work the clock struck the hour for a dissolution of the Thirteenth Congress; whose members, almost bewildered by the sudden transition from despair to delight, did not, however, disperse to their homes without recommending to the country a day of thanksgiving to Almighty God "for His great goodness manifested in restoring to these United States the blessing of peace."

The last two years of Madison's administration, embracing the period of the Fourteenth Congress, possess little historical interest. A nation of strong vitality emerging from a wasteful war, seeks needful rest and recuperation; accounts are cast and adjusted; scaffoldings and temporary props against danger are taken

down and the house is put to rights, swept, and garnished; the old order changes, but not yet giving place to the new. Our first consciousness was that of complete emancipation, like that of a child reaching majority. Neither French faction nor British faction could exist among this great people longer. The American Union, henceforth a nation with peculiar interests and peculiar institutions, would pursue its independent course upon an independent responsibility, free from the control or interference of the Old World. Like passengers on an emigrant ship dropping down the channel, whose pilot has just left for shore, our people realized for the moment more keenly the severance of ties two centuries old, and of dependence as colonies upon Europe, hitherto almost habitual, than the new freedom of the deep and a new destiny. This constitutional Union had passed the outer light of early experiment. On the vanishing bank stood the great founders, the revolutionary fathers, the Mentors, all who had hoped or feared for it. A new era was dawning. Those provincial thirteen, or that frugal confederacy of unwarlike States; who would ever imagine such a Union again?

Madison, certainly, who saw the driftwood of old parties floating by, had no strong desire but to avoid dangers, and round his anxious administration and long public career to a happy close. To provide a national peace establishment and restore the disordered finances was his main solicitude. The Fourteenth Congress worked harmoniously with the Executive to the same end.

The war of 1812 was fought under circumstances

quite adverse to the United States, and adverse, most of all, in what human wisdom could hardly have foreseen, the sudden and utter downfall and collapse of the Napoleon dynasty, because of an idiosyncrasy,—the blind fatalism of its founder. The season did not seem ill chosen at first; but so quickly was the whole European skein unravelled, that England's victorious arms were turned against America almost as soon as American troops could fight in earnest. From an intended conquest of Canada, the war became a struggle to maintain in its integrity the territory we already owned.

This state of things, however, brought its own compensation. America owed no new debt of gratitude to France, and had incurred no responsibility whatever in the good or ill fortune of her misguided ruler. His Leipsic was not ours, nor his Austerlitz. Moreover, with Napoleon crushed and revolutionary France stretched prostrate, weary Europe sought repose. The war for maritime supremacy was over, with the violence used to obtain it, and peace on the Continent of old institutions laid a rational foundation for the solid superstructure of peace between the United States and Great Britain. The American attitude at the period of the Vienna Congress assured for this country practical advantages with Europe far beyond what the treaty of Ghent in terms professed to confer.

We had resisted contumely and wrong; we had negotiated, protested, and then had fought for free, unobstructed trade and sailors' rights. Fighting, we had humiliated on the ocean the proudest and, in that day, the most insolent naval power of the world. Precisely this was the guaranty of commerce and commercial respect that our young and rising nation needed, and the only one worth having at all; for England respected

courage above all things, and neutral commerce at her loss there could not have been so long as she could make the neutral her fag and subordinate. Hull, Bainbridge, Decatur, Jones, and Perry negotiated, therefore, the impressment difficulty better than all the secretaries and envoys since 1790; and of British invaders there was no longer a fear after Jackson's siege-guns had spoken at New Orleans. Under the treaty of 1814, in short, the United States of America became completely divested for the first time of the colonial attribute and solemnly divorced from Europe.

The lessons of this war to the Old World and the New were worth all they cost; which cost, at the most liberal calculation,—apart from the loss of human life incident to all wars,—consisted of a war debt easily paid off afterwards; of spoliation claims against a bankrupt emperor, whose liquidation neither frowns nor friendship were likely to have ever procured; of the forced suspension of a foreign commerce fleeced on both sides of the Channel, and scarcely pursued at all except by violating the decrees of one power for the benefit of another. To sanguine Americans this war administered a wholesome corrective of excellent Jeffersonian maxims. It taught them that passion and self-aggrandizement, with nations as with individuals, may blunt the edge of honor; that for international disputes a good argument is well sustained by a prudent display of warlike resources; that while war should be the last resort of an aggrieved nation, wars prove costly when entered upon with inadequate preparation, can seldom accomplish the earliest expectation, and never are easily relinquished; that Americans should abate State pride and draw closer into the bonds of nationality, as the strongest safeguard against wars without and commo-

tions within, and yet trust the honor of the American name to the intelligent American people, confident of their means, their constancy, their patriotism, for protecting it in a good cause against the mightiest foe on earth. For invasion this Union might fail, but for self-defence it was invincible.

Monroe's election was hailed at the West, where, like Jefferson, he enjoyed immense popularity without having ever made its tour; and this was partly because of his agency in procuring for the Union a free Mississippi. Nor were Eastern men displeased; for even Anglo-Federalists remembered Monroe as negotiator of the British treaty which Jefferson had rejected. "Hartford Convention," and "Blue lights," were already words of reproach hard for them to bear. Harrison Gray Otis and his associates tendered the olive branch, desiring friendship with the incoming administration. An intimate friend of Monroe visited Boston in 1816, and this set treated him with marked hospitality. They wished Monroe would journey to New England and discover for himself how firm was the loyalty of that section. 1816–17.

Monroe was not unimpressed by these overtures, but, nevertheless, reserved his decision. He agreed with Andrew Jackson, who had advised him in the course of a singular correspondence, divulged many years later, that the chief magistrate of the country ought not to be the head of a party, but of the nation. Those, thought the President-elect, who left the Federal party during the war, were entitled to the highest confidence; but towards Federalists with principles unfriendly to our system he felt differently. "The ad-

ministration," he wrote to Jackson, "ought to rest strongly upon the Republican party, indulging towards the other a spirit of moderation and discrimination; we must prevent the reorganization and revival of the Federal party."

While Monroe thus forecast the future, Madison's sun sank calmly to its setting. This administration had been an eventful one, full of strange vicissitudes; but joy came at last, and long tribulation brought a welcome peace, more secure than America had known for seventy years. Madison, therefore, left public station with applause; and the genuine esteem with which he was already regarded, after a long public career of unsullied honor, unswerving patriotism, and conspicuous usefulness to his fellow-men, gradually deepened into affection, if not reverence. He outlived all his contemporaries of 1787, and all political enmities; and in the course of his long and happy retirement earned new claims to public gratitude by contributing much to the historical record of his illustrious times and assuaging the heat of new controversies. His homestead, approached through long avenues of noble trees, was Montpelier, a fine wheat farm, not far from the little town of Orange; and here, with his accomplished wife, he lived quietly among neighbors of simple manners like himself, Jefferson, his distinguished friend, being within half a day's ride. Faithful in all the relations of life, pure, upright, diligent, discreet, disinterested, benevolent, Madison possessed those traits to which old age always gives lustre. Well-deserving of the nation, he had attained all the honors the nation could bestow, and had done a remarkable filial service in return. His faults were those of a prudent rather than a zealous or daring executive; respon-

sibility rested uneasily upon his shoulders, for he had been bred a counsellor, and as President he could not stand firmly against opposition. His administration had been weakest where the pressure came upon executive discretion, and strongest where its course was dictated by the popular wishes, of which Madison had always a delicate perception. Conscientious as he was docile and capable, even weakness like this could not ruin the public interests committed to him, for discipline brought correction; and though a President of accommodating opinions, perhaps, his opinions were accommodated, nevertheless, to the times. Madison could never go far wrong, for he never went counter to the sense of those he governed; but in the war of 1812 he seemed less a preceptor and guide than the instrument of those who took up arms so boldly to vindicate American honor; and hence the American people remembered his Presidency in after years less for his achievements than their own.

As contrasted with his greater friend Jefferson, with whom comparisons were naturally instituted as long as they both lived, Madison appeared to some disadvantage; impressing others less as a statesman, a free and easy liver and man of the world, than as some laborious closet counsellor, thoughtful and reserved, who puts others forward to act, after bestowing his judicious advice. But Madison's wisdom and experience were ample; he was skilful in debate as with the pen; though reticent, he knew well where to strike; and with all his customary precision of manner and quiet demeanor, he was withal social and good-humored among intimate acquaintances, full of anecdote, and given not unfrequently to sly sallies of repartee that provoked a laugh. A little man in stature, with small

features, rather wizened by the time he was President, he incited those who disliked his politics into diminutive and disparaging epithets; but delicate and puny as he looked, few statesmen ever bore with such elasticity the terrible anxieties of an eventful career. In dress Madison always showed good taste; there was no affectation or dandyism about him; but like a well-bred gentleman of the old school he appeared in dignified black, with knee breeches and buckles, black silk stockings, and powdered hair.

Few Presidents, it has been remarked,* ever quitted office under circumstances so agreeable as those which surrounded this second of the Republican chieftains; and no man of good feeling, we may add, can grudge Madison the happiness under which his immensely difficult administration at last terminated, nor the cheerful disposition which he was enabled to carry with him into the decline of years. Modest by nature, he never claimed more than his due allowance of the public gratitude; and in that humane and benevolent strain which suited his temperament far better than the fulminations of bloody strife, he closed his last annual message to Congress, with a eulogium upon the American people and their government for seeking "by appeals to reason, and by its liberal examples, to infuse into the law which governs the civilized world a spirit which may diminish the frequency or circumscribe the calamities of war, and meliorate the social and beneficent relations of peace; a government, in a word, whose conduct, within and without, may bespeak the most noble of all ambitions,—that of promoting peace on earth and goodwill to man."

*9 H. Adams, 142.

CHAPTER X.

FIRST ADMINISTRATION OF JAMES MONROE.

§ I. Period of Fifteenth Congress. March 4, 1817-March 3, 1819. —§ II. Period of Sixteenth Congress. March 4, 1819-March 3, 1821.

MONROE was inaugurated on a day of spring sunshine, unusual for early March in the latitude of our national capital. The softness of the air, the radiance of the noonday sun, the serenity of the rural surroundings, from wooded heights to the placid Potomac, carried a sense of tranquil happiness to the hearts of thousands of spectators who had assembled for the out-of-door ceremonies on Capitol Hill. No accident or mishap from sunrise to midnight marred the peaceful pleasure of the auspicious occasion. 1817. March 4.

These public ceremonies had most of the usual accompaniments of a Presidential inauguration. There was an escort to Capitol Hill, and back through Pennsylvania Avenue, made up, as in those times was customary, of District militia, regulars, and marines, together with a large cavalcade of citizens and others whom a Virginian executive might well regard as friends and neighbors. The retiring and the incoming President rode together in friendly companionship. There was the usual brief reception in the Senate Chamber, where Tompkins, the Vice-President elect, had just

been sworn into office; the adjournment to a portico outside, where, in sight of the assembled multitude and surrounded by members of Congress and the high officers of the republic, the chief magistrate-elect read his manuscript address, at whose close, Marshall, the Chief Justice, attired in black gown, administered the simple oath. Then followed an artillery salute, loud cheers, and the commotion of a dispersing crowd. The new President, like his predecessor, received congratulations in the afternoon and attended in the evening a public ball.

But in one marked particular Monroe's inauguration differed from all others before or since. Though the ceremonies took place on Capitol Hill, they were conducted at a little distance from the historical or hallowed ground; in fact, some hundred rods to the northeast of those ruined and smoke-stained wings of the Capitol, whose renovation had lately commenced, and in front of a new and unpretentious brick building which one Daniel Carroll and others had erected soon after the British invasion, and leased to the government for the accommodation of the national legislature. On an elevated portico, here erected for the special occasion, stood Monroe when he pronounced his inaugural address; and, as he spoke, he and his auditors might contemplate an impressive spectacle. Yonder monumental piles, which marked the site of our former demolished national temple, were rising once again, slowly but safely, better proportioned, with an enlarged area, the walls resting upon their original foundations. Fragments of the old marble columns, consumed by intense heat, and blocks of freestone which were cracked and utterly spoiled, had ere this been removed from the north wing of the Capitol, where British desecration

did its worst; in the south wing, though columns and the vault they supported stood comparatively uninjured, much had to be taken down, that a space might be cleared for rebuilding; so that at the present point of progress the work of architect and builder typified immortal hope blossoming afresh out of the relics of despair. This scene, which nature kindled into resplendent brightness, found no expression in Monroe's unimaginative and premeditated utterances, but silently it deepened, we may rest assured, the lesson which was spoken. The key-note of his address was renewed faith in the Union. He dwelt upon the happy vindication of our republican experiment through war as well as peace; upon the renewed prosperity of the American people, and an increasing harmony of States and sections, which he pledged himself to promote. Peace and recuperation, peace and national unity,—these were the sentiments of the day and the occasion.

Monroe had come into the Presidency at a time and under circumstances most opportune for reconciling the jarring sections, and becoming in person the great pacificator of our national politics. He had earned promotion to the highest office by long and meritorious public service; he had proved himself under Madison the most useful of civilians in a great crisis, as well as the most trusted. Nor had Monroe shrunk from assuming responsibility in that crisis; for when, in 1814, he had charge of the War Department, and a conscription seemed inevitable, he frankly told his friends, who were preparing to nominate him to the Presidency, that as he must take the odium of proposing and executing so unpopular a measure, they

ought to put him aside. War ended suddenly, and without a conscription; and now he had been chosen President by a vote so expressive of popular confidence, that ever since the day of election, when it became clear that political parties could rally no longer on the old issues, politicians of all parties had been hastening to assure him of their friendship and tender their co-operation. Monroe was, however, no theorist, but a sagacious, experienced, and withal honorable statesman; one, moreover, who had been brought up in the school of Republicanism. Two things he felt were essential in any event to a successful administration: one that it should lean primarily on those who had brought it into power; the other that it should be composed of harmonious and not distracting elements. For no reunion of political parties can be more false or deceptive than that which consists in dividing up the official patronage among the old leaders, victors and vanquished alike. To call in men who had inflexibly opposed the late war, and whose pride must have been deeply wounded by its results, meant only distraction and constant embarrassment, besides giving to the world the false impression that America had become ashamed of her own cause. Moreover, the chosen candidate of a party should not be perfidious to that party. Hence, in the private correspondence between himself and Jackson, already alluded to, Monroe had pronounced himself in favor of keeping the government in the hands of its decided friends,—of those who had stood firm in the day of trial. But at the same time he expressed the desire to indulge a spirit of moderation towards late opponents, to discriminate among them, and to bring all into one fold as quietly as possible.

"Many men highly distinguished for their talents,"

wrote Monroe, "are of opinion that the existence of the Federal party is necessary to keep union and order in the Republican ranks; that is, that free governments cannot exist without parties. This is not my opinion. That the ancient republics were always divided into parties; that the English government is maintained by an opposition—that is, by the existence of a party in opposition to the ministry—I well know. But I think that the cause of these divisions is to be found in certain defects of those governments rather than in human nature; and that we have happily avoided those defects in our system."

The political tenets thus expressed were not those of the old school of statesmen. Neither Adams nor Jefferson believed that free government could exist without contending parties; and such at this day is the popular belief, though many appear to insist that the public welfare requires their own party to be constantly intrenched in power while the opposition remains as constantly excluded. Nevertheless that old parties may so dissolve and old party names disappear, as to afford for a season the beautiful spectacle of a whole people reunited and knit firmly together in fraternal affection, there is no reason to doubt. Taken in their natural course, parties organize, disorganize, and reorganize, as vital issues change. Within seventy-five years passed away the Anti-Federal, the Federal, the first Republican, the Whig, the Native American parties. When, therefore, in some clearly defined and overwhelming political conflict, producing fixed and lasting results, one set of political leaders has wholly lost and the other has wholly won, a dissolution of parties should ensue. To keep old wounds open, to lacerate the vanquished, becomes rather the effort of the ambitious and unprincipled, who are

unwilling to disband their followers, than of a people like ours, who yearn for reconciliation and hasten to renew their intercourse. Here a magnanimous policy is the true and the safer one; and the administration that persecutes without crushing, compels new constitutional infractions to punish old ones, and leads out its party as it was before, has cruelly abused its opportunity. None, however, but a President of comprehensive views, sound discretion, and irreproachable honor can accomplish the needful task of exterminating old party divisions and giving new strength and direction to the government. To such a task at the present time Monroe addressed himself, with a confidence in results that was not misplaced.

As the last of the great Virginian executives identified with our early national history, Monroe challenges respect as one who had preserved for his own administration the ripe fruit of former experience. He was proud of his native State and of all who had given it imperishable renown. A filial follower of the great Jefferson, whom he still consulted on public affairs, and of whose confidence in the popular instinct he freely partook, he had nevertheless convinced himself, in the course of a long diplomatic service abroad, that jealous nations were not to be restrained from aggression by the maxims of peace and philanthropy. To Madison he resorted for advice still more constantly; and that worthiest of friends and wisest of advisers shone, when finally relieved of the executive direction, in a most becoming sphere. But Monroe did not confine himself to the old Republican circles of influence. Marshall he admired. Nor could his heart cease to own its secret

allegiance to Virginia's greatest of sons, the first President. The memory of a personal difference with Washington left a sad but mellowing influence. Though Monroe always believed that injustice was done him in his recall from France in 1796, his resentment had turned gradually from chief executive to a partisan cabinet and then had dried up altogether; possibly, too, as experience and reflection strengthened him, he came to ascribe much of the blame to himself. Be this as it may, by the time of his accession to the Presidency, the illustrious example of the first incumbent had become with Monroe an overpowering influence. In official methods and intercourse he aimed at restoring something of its pristine dignity to the chief magistracy. He travelled through the States north and south as Washington had done, to acquaint himself better with the condition and sentiments of the people. He sought the same high plane of unpartisan service. Without Washington's commanding presence, transcendent fame, or superb endowments, he nevertheless had grown to resemble him strongly in predominant traits of character; and more especially, in an honest sincerity of purpose to administer well; in habits of patient and deliberate investigation, all contending arguments being weighed dispassionately; and in a fixed determination not to be influenced in a public trust by private considerations. Even in personal looks the last Virginian, with his placid and sedate expression of face, regular features, and a grayish-blue eye, which invited confidence, had come to appear not unlike the first; so that in these years the names of Washington and Monroe became naturally coupled together. This resemblance, however, was most nearly like that of father and son, where the one, whose character was the stronger, has inspired awe,

while the other touches rather the chord of personal sympathy by the blending of softer maternal traits.

Towards his grand exemplar Monroe's later yearnings were indeed those of a surviving son, loved but perhaps disowned; and he preserved with touching constancy the details of a strange story which circulated in Virginia circles. Washington, it was said, loved the young Monroe to his death; and his death was owing, not so much to an accidental personal exposure to the weather on an inclement day, according to the usual report, as to the chagrin which preyed on his mind after he saw how the fall election had resulted. For a Republican victory in Virginia brought Monroe from retirement into the governor's chair, and Washington felt that his own State rebuked him for a harshness he had long regretted but had never atoned for.

In imitation of Washington, Monroe, soon after his inauguration, made an extended tour northward. Its results were remarkable in re-establishing that fraternal spirit which he had pledged himself to restore, and in binding together once more States friendly and States disaffected to the cause of the Union during the late war. The state of Monroe's health, which needed relaxation, favored such a journey; so, too, the desire to gain personal information; nor had the invitation of Otis and his Boston associates been forgotten. But the immediate occasion of the tour was to inspect and draw public attention to a new system of coast fortifications, which, with the sanction of the late Congress, was progressing under the capable direction of General Bernard, a French officer, who brought letters from

Lafayette, and remained until the work was in substance completed.

It was in Boston, during the present tour, that the felicitous phrase "the era of good feeling" originated, which has since by general acclamation become the appropriate epithet of Monroe's eight-years' term. Nor can it be doubted that such an era, for better or worse, was now ushered in; its best accompaniment being the long subsidence of popular tumults, and its worst the petty scheming of rival leaders, who must needs jostle in a port when the seas are closed. The old party lines presently began to fade. The name of "Democrat," which had been gradually acquiring favor, was dropped for a time; that of "Federalist" quite disappeared, and even Jeffersonian Republicanism lost its earlier significance.

While in Boston, Monroe was pointedly warned by a Massachusetts man of conspicuous family, who disclaimed personal interest, that former Federal leaders were jealous of one another, that they craved power and distinction, and that of them all only Webster and Lloyd could be trusted. He apprehended, too, that, notwithstanding the eastern people of all parties had now come over to him, they were still too much under the old and virulent political influences, and that only younger men, impressible with the national idea of the future, were fit to conduct them into new lines of policy and new combinations. Pre-eminently fit for that work was Webster, as the event proved; a growing giant of superb intellectual endowments, born to command. Though a conservative by temperament and a Federalist by training, his past record had not committed him to the acerbities of the late war; and present retirement serving him well for reflection and the accumulation of

power, when he re-entered public life in the full panoply of manhood his section might trust him as an eloquent defender, and the whole people as a statesman whose ruling passion was the love of a national union.

That Clay was vexed at not having the first place in the cabinet offered to him cannot be doubted; nor that his chagrin was increased when he knew that Adams, with whom he had so constantly bickered at Ghent, had received the portfolio of State instead. It was early foreseen that in consequence Clay, though ranking hitherto among the friends of the new administration, would oppose it in Congress. A man of ardent ambition, Clay was, nevertheless, honorable in the main, lofty in general purpose, and sedulous of the public welfare. He had been a most useful statesman of late, both as legislator and diplomatist, helping the country out of the war with Great Britain as skilfully as he had led it in; and, in whatever service engaged, leaving the remarkable impression of courage, self-confidence and fertility in resources. But a lively imagination sometimes captivated his judgment, and throwing the full radiance of his lantern forward, he would spring upon a new path without perceiving the obstacles which were closest. At this time his quick political instinct told Clay that the American people would leave the old parties and re-form on new issues. He darted forward to occupy those issues and become the standard bearer of the future. But he did not realize that this dissolution of old parties would be slow, very slow; nor how gladly our citizens would welcome, meantime, the unwonted respite from political turbulence. He could not be convinced that Monroe had both the power

and opportunity to repress the growth of new parties; and, blindly enough, he appears to have shared Crawford's belief that there would be a speedy schism among Monroe's supporters, followed by a new combination of the discordant elements which, headed by a dissatisfied West, his own section and the section not represented in the cabinet, might, under good management, bring the new administration to the ground.

Both Crawford and Clay were in a sense political gamesters. Clay played for popularity, or rather for that public gratitude of which official promotion is, or should be, the natural expression. He caught the omens of the future, and his ambition was of that generous sort which makes one eager to be first in promoting measures for the general good. Out of the ideas now floating in the public mind he gathered presently an American system or policy which he impressed upon the coming age with all the vigor of his eloquence and personality; so that, whatever his individual disappointments, and these were many, his name remains inseparable from the annals of his times.

With a good cause and generous motives for espousing it, Clay must have been irresistible. So impetuous was the torrent of his eloquence, rich in illustration and apt in allusion; so readily did he seem to grasp the strong points of the cause he presented, pleasing and surprising his hearers by the remote analogies which a delicate intuition detected; so strongly would he put forth the results of an investigation which bore no trace either of lapse or laborious study; and above all, such was his fervid appeal as a fellow-man to humanity, to the pride or the shame, not of collective listeners alone, but of each individual among them who dared to doubt; that he seemed to storm at the door of the

heart while making a feint of convincing the intellect. It was thus that, though miscalculating the consequences, he had in 1812 nerved the country to plunge into war with Great Britain, and in 1813 to continue the conflict for sailors' rights. The vivid personification of the cause he pleaded: the wanderer, the prisoner, the outcast, the persecuted sufferer, or, on the other hand, that cowardly auditor whom he defied to go home and confess to his constituents his own baseness,—by such portraiture he enforced his lesson. In such impassioned flights Clay seemed to soar in the pure ether, forgetful, like the eagle, of meaner motives that might have given his smoothly-spread wings their first flapping impulse thither. Clay's oratory, which has already passed into tradition, so inseparable were the matter and manner of his speeches, borrowed little from grace of gesture or the arts of rhetoric. He was tall and spare, not very muscular, and when in repose his countenance too often indicated dissipation as well as genius. When crossed in his wishes, or slighted, as on the present occasion, he showed himself haughty and exasperating; if indulged far, he became overbearing; but his disposition was generous, and his temper by no means implacable. His friendly approach would dispel personal enmity and soften prejudice, one of its familiar accompaniments being the offer or acceptance of a pinch of snuff, which he enjoyed after the custom of the times. Without special features to attract, Clay's whole aspect was engaging, while he conversed agreeably. But when he spoke the impression conveyed was immeasurably greater. Not fluent or rapid in utterance at first, he gained in fire and energy of expression as his speech went on; a slight awkwardness of gesture which might mar the effect, until speaker and listener had warmed

into sympathy, ceased to be perceptible. Clay's eye beamed, his face brightened, all the movements of his figure showed that he was earnestly engrossed with his subject, and when at length he sat down the legislative chamber reverberated with the accents of a most melodious voice.

Revolution in the Spanish American colonies was a phenomenon of the times which bore witness, first, to the rapid decline of Castilian influence in that new world which a Catholic line of monarchs had first appropriated as royal domain; next, to the expanding force of the self-governing idea for which the United States stood as chief exponent and exemplar. Liberty, repulsed by legitimacy abroad, winged her way across the Atlantic. Once more had commenced the war between Spain and her American colonies which antedated the present century. The tyranny and extortion of viceroys, the cupidity of adventurers from Europe, sufferings endured under an unequal rule and in the course of wars from which they themselves could reap no benefit, swelled the long catalogue of grievances presented by these South American subjects to justify their revolt against the mother-country. In 1778 the ignorant Indians of Upper Peru sought, but unsuccessfully, to throw off the yoke of Spain. Tranquillity followed their failure until the opening of the nineteenth century; at which epoch, and in the midst of European war and commotions, many of the South American provinces found their secret longings for liberty fostered by the policy which Pitt or Napoleon might in turn elect to pursue, not from sympathy, but rather so as to cripple Spain, according as the lot of

that country happened to be cast with the one opponent or the other. To the project of emancipating these Spanish provinces and laying their ports open to British commerce—for in British policy trade and philanthropy seek constantly the same market—we have already alluded in connection with that ill-fated Miranda enterprise which once so dazzled the mind of our Hamilton. Spain's ill success in the European struggle at length gave the South Americans the longed-for opportunity, and by 1813-14 they had broken into rebellion, Buenos Ayres taking the lead. But the revolutionists were wary; for though mounting the republican cockade, hoisting an independent flag, and coining their own money, they issued decrees in the name of his Catholic Majesty. When Ferdinand VII. became restored to the Spanish throne, Buenos Ayres sent a deputation to Madrid acknowledging a conditional allegiance. But the haughty king refused to temporize; new popular outbreaks occurred; and on the 9th of July, 1816, the patriot Congress of Buenos Ayres formally declared the independence of the province. From that day the contest became one of contending armies, between invader and defender. Nor was the revolution confined to Buenos Ayres; for Paraguay and the eastern shore of the La Plata, regions hitherto governed by the Spanish commandant at Buenos Ayres, except for some portions held by Portugal, likewise revolted. Chili, too, formally declared an independence which, behind its mountain ramparts, had been virtually enjoyed for many years. The revolutionary spirit spread through Venezuela and the northern provinces of South America which had alternately refused and acknowledged European allegiance; and nowhere in the heart of the Andes or west of the valley of the Amazon was Spanish su-

premacy longer secure. Brazil, however, that vast eastern domain of South America, had, after various vicissitudes, accepted an hereditary empire in 1808 from Portugal, and was long contented.

The great Republican party which Jefferson founded now hastened to a dissolution, having fulfilled its important mission, first, by educating the American people to trust their own virtue and capacity, and next by inducing them to strike boldly away the last links which bound us in colonial subservience to Europe and European methods.

Of late years there had been an ardent element perceptible in our politics, smothered, perhaps, and smouldering, so long as talents, education, and property still clearly kept the mastery. Smoke issued from the flanks of the rumbling earth, and down in some yawning fissure glowed the red embers. These were the eruptions of the fierce but nearly suffocated democracy, jealous and emulous of rule, but always repressed, or at least restrained from mischief, by the common sense of the cheerful majority.

Wherever, then, great social inequalities exist, there must be a class which staggers under harsh burdens of life that cannot be lifted, and knows little of its pleasures. That class, under a political system like ours, constitutes the fierce democracy, or, under its harshest aspect, the mob, the commune; and let these protest, let them vote as they choose, the first step is taken towards making them contented citizens. More conservative by temperament, more respectful to superiors, more in harmony with well-ordered systems of government, less ignorant, less violent, better quali-

fied to rise superior to early disadvantages and achieve wealth and position, is the native citizen of Anglo-Saxon blood. It is the fickle and excitable immigrant who falls more readily into the class we describe; for the hand of oppression has moulded habits and character so that adaptation to free institutions becomes difficult, almost hopeless; and without hope one curses the happy. Opportunity to rise dissolves individual membership in this class, and keeps jealousy from compacting mischief.

As between the two old parties, Federalist and Republican, the latter had doubtless most befriended this class, and commanded its sympathy. It was Jefferson's party which called upon those in the humbler walks to participate, while Hamilton's bade them submit. It was the former which had welcomed foreign toilers to these shores, while the other sought not only to repress, but to banish him. The excesses of the French revolution, nevertheless, made the name of "Democrat" long obnoxious to Anglo-Americans. Washington himself put a stigma upon it. Nor, as we have shown, had Jefferson himself, but Jefferson's enemies, applied the epithet to that well-organized force which carried the Presidency in 1800, and had held it ever since; their object being to excite prejudice, his to allay it. Fifteen years, however, had produced a change. The Republican party, as a national body, now embraced both democratic and conservative elements, and one might have heard since Jefferson's retirement not only of "Republican" or "old school" men, but of "Democratic Republicans;" nay, even of those who gloried in the name of Democrat. The "Federal-

ist party" as such existed no longer, but conservatives of a British patrician cast, who took pride in Federal antecedents, were to be found in the political ranks; these not unfrequently holding the balance of power amid the vulgar quarrels to which factious republicans of democratic stripe descended, more especially in the Middle States, where incongruous elements, native and foreign, were brought together. Federalism was allied at the Eastward with judges, college professors, scions of the old families, rich merchants, and the other elements locally dominant in its homogeneous society. By way of allusion to the past, or for convenient discrimination, newspapers would sometimes employ still the old party names; but the word "Federalist" had ere this passed into our popular speech as the odious synonyme of "Tory," "Hartford Conventionist," or "Blue-light man"; and most who had once been proud of the name wished it dropped.

Monroe's tour served to obliterate these old party distinctions, so that for a time even the rising "Democrat" was forgotten. To national issues succeeded State or local ones, scarcely a basis being afforded for consolidating political differences. To say that the old parties amalgamated at this era would be inaccurate: it was rather that they now disbanded, permitting those in the ranks to turn to private concerns. They who lived by politics, however, still warred as they might for its patronage.

Among issues of the day which threatened new political combinations, that of internal improvements deserves further mention. With society sweetened in its harmonious intercourse, we had turned already as by

a common impulse to great undertakings, of which the Erie canal seemed at this hour the most gigantic. Throughout America new roads, new canals, new edifices, were projected. To meet this enormous outlay and competition, the State, the public, would be urged to subscribe, if not to shoulder the enterprise. Admitting, however, the right of a State legislature in the premises, how stood it with Congress and the national government? For the extension of roads and canals beyond State limits, so as to knit remote parts of the Union together, was by all conceded to be a national benefit. One of Madison's last official acts was to negative a bill which proposed setting apart a national fund for internal improvements. The Executive objection being the constitutional one, a dissension now arose in the Republican ranks; many leaders, in their eagerness to commit the general treasury to projects, popular in their own State, whose cost its legislature dared not assume, acceding to that liberal construction of national powers for which Hamilton and the Federalists had earlier contended; while others held to Jefferson and the old Virginia doctrine that the federal constitution conferred a delegated authority from the States or the people which should be strictly interpreted. The main question was whether to place a broad or narrow construction upon that phrase of the instrument which gives Congress authority to lay taxes "to pay the debts and provide for the general welfare," so as to extend or not the powers specifically enumerated to whatever would promote the general welfare.

A remarkable man now emerges from brief retirement into conspicuous notice, to fix more constantly

the public gaze, and even concentrate it, until recognized as the most striking American of the age, and in a certain sense the most popular, if not the most illustrious. For whatever Jackson might do, were it done rightly or wrongly, he threw himself vigorously into the act, and made a deep impression, often a sensation, such, probably, as he studied to produce. As the hero of New Orleans and conqueror of the Creeks, he enjoyed already the best military renown of all our generals who had served in the second war, because the only one of them all who had won a brilliant victory. Peace did not find him first in actual rank, however, nor was his reputation derived from that trying test against a skilful foe, which exacts the steady discipline of forces in hand, profound insight, a mind capable of combining and of studying the intricate combinations of others, an executive grasp of the thousand minute details involved in feeding, equipping, and moving a large army separated into detachments, and, above all, self-command under difficulties. No one, perhaps, except Washington and Hamilton, had as yet on this continent fulfilled the ideal of commander; certainly none during the late war, whose military exploits furnished as much for blushing as boasting; though Jacob Brown, now the ranking general, and certainly a well-deserving hero, displayed a bureau capacity for times of peace which few would have conceded to one so rash, so unlearned, and withal so little used to conventional forms as Jackson. Nevertheless, this one had addressed himself to the humbler task of subduing savages or defending a city with an audacity, zeal, and fertility of resource deserving of wider opportunities; and he alone could have said, with Cæsar, "I came, I saw, I conquered."

Here let us remark, that between the two great leaders of the American democracy, as developed down to the era of the civil war of 1861, the earlier and the later, cordiality never existed; each seems never to have appreciated the other, and certainly the younger never acknowledged himself a disciple. The passing conjunction of two natures, powerful and original, but singularly inharmonious, and never brought into practical co-operation, explains this antipathy; for antipathy it must be called. Jefferson and Jackson first met in 1797 at Philadelphia, the temporary capital; the one Vice-President elect, and the recognized leader of a party which exulted in the first flush of national victory, persuading his friends to give Washington a generous exit; the other new to politics and the polite constraints of society, a sullen nobody of that party, sitting in the Senate like a cynic in his tub, shaggy and uncouth in appearance, who doggedly refused to offer incense to the retiring President. And thus it went on for the brief remnant of Jackson's first sojourn in national politics; the urbane president of the Senate watching with amusement a member who was so choleric and ill at ease that when he rose to speak the words choked in his throat. Jackson, in fact, was not cut out to figure in a deliberative body of dignified men; and the turning-point of his career came when Tennessee made this toughest of her pioneers, at the age of 34, a major-general of State militia. Jefferson, then, was of the upper stratum in republican politics, Jackson of the lower; the one of good blood and inherited fortune, seeming to stoop that he might serve the multitude; the other a man of the multitude, and of those jealous democrats, moreover, who envied the nobly born; indeed, a southern white of extraction so humble, that

to this day it is a matter of dispute whether he was born in North or South Carolina. In Jefferson appeared tact, the desire to convince, and a persevering good humor; Jackson, on the other hand, though persevering, was only good humored while he had his own way, could be influenced by those alone who knew how to play upon his vanity, and was satisfied when he compelled. Jefferson was smooth and diplomatic, Jackson dogged and downright. The one belonged to that older school of our politics which separates public from private friendships, puts the trustworthy and capable first, and remits each who serves to his proper place; but with the latter the main theory was to make both public and private friendship consist in personal attachment to himself, and use patronage as the rich spoils of martial victory.

While these two remarkable men remained in contact, the one was the idol of his party, and kept the reins of national discipline, while the other idolized no one, preferring the easy surroundings of frontier life and to rise in wealth and consequence with his adopted State. His choice was discreet for his personal advancement; for Tennessee long clung to her favorite son, and Jackson's devoted band advanced him with unflagging zeal in the teeth of a formidable prejudice, inherited from our colonial ancestors, in favor of trained statesmanship and social culture as essential qualifications for high public trusts.

By the time Congress re-assembled in November, 1818, Andrew Jackson was of all Americans the man universally discussed. So rude was the shock given of late to republican susceptibilities by his exploits in

Florida,* whose outcome might yet be a European war, that the public mind was still bewildered; many questioned the right, more the propriety of his acts; but the course taken by our administration aided a lenient public judgment, while the shouts of Tennessee and the far west, proclaiming Jackson a genuine hero, the coming man, rolled over the Alleghanies, and mingled with the thundering surfs of the Atlantic. The general mass will quickly sympathize with him who has dared in the common cause; nor in those days, while the bitterness of the late war lingered, was the American democracy likely to idolize the less one who embodied in himself those traits which awaken enthusiasm because he had executed two Britishers and two Red Stick chiefs with impartial contempt. An extraordinary man, indeed, had arisen at the west; the story of his life was asked, his services at New Orleans were recalled; and to become in this country the theme of national discussion, compelling with so much public curiosity such genuine admiration, meant of necessity to be canvassed by the politicians for the Presidency.

Tenderly and sacredly as our Revolutionary sires were now treated by those whose career emblazons the annals of 1812, and whose anxiety to wipe away the last stain of filial reproach appeared so manifest, posterity has not in its turn rendered to them such decent offices. Whatever the merits of those who conducted the second struggle of American Independence, and the undoubted service they rendered in severing this country from Europe, they never reached the same high

*This was during the recent conflict known as the "Seminole war."

plane of æsthetic honors. The poverty of subjects for the artist's pencil, which essays in vain to poetize frigates fighting a duel in mid-ocean, or long ranks resting their rifles upon cotton breastworks, may in part account for this; and of the few scenes which, well depicted, ought to stir the depths of a loyal heart, Perry's victory alone has yet been attempted with anything approaching success. A weightier explanation is found in the levelling effect of our modern institutions and the development of a national temperament less susceptible than formerly to patriotic impressions; moreover, in the long-divided sentiment which has prevailed among Americans themselves respecting the justifying causes of this second war, and as to whether the United States had really gained by it. That the war was both justifiable on principle and advantageous in fact,—crowned, indeed, with blessings far greater than immediately appeared, and only to be reproved as rashly undertaken,—history must admit; nevertheless, the first struggle of 1776 burns with more of the celestial fire, nor has America ever produced but one commander who, like Washington, embodied the cause for which he fought.

With this new buoyancy of republican and New-World ideas, this spontaneous impulse given to our national character, there mingled somewhat of a lofty and pitying scorn for Europe and the Old-World institutions. Our American people felt that they had a country of their own; and proudly did they boast of that country at this moment, as they drew unflattering comparisons. What would become of exhausted and bankrupt Europe, now waking from the dream of imperialism, its rulers and people alike beggared and hastening to decay, its restored monarchs searching for the gew-

gaws of infallibility, the legitimate scions of the aristocracy rearing illegitimate offspring? Ferdinand was a despot without resources, the royal Bourbons of France puppets of an armed alliance who pulled the wires, the acting King of England a drunkard and libertine, and its actual one a hopeless imbecile. The age of barbarism had commenced in the Old World, and some master-spirit would end it. But here, in the New World, the sovereign people, fearing neither priestcraft nor kingcraft, made equal laws and lived by them. Those laws appealed to the whole human race in the spirit of universal philanthropy. If the Indian remained an outcast and the negro a slave, their fate, nevertheless, could not involve that of our glorious inheritance. Here, on freedom's natal day, confusion to tyrants was the toast; success, moreover, to our South American brethren-in-arms, and to Bolivar, just emerging from exile to be their great deliverer. Happy was America, no longer shackled, no longer in superstitious bondage. Here on these shores was found the Elysium for the oppressed of all climes, liberty's safe-harbor, the land of peace and plenty.

The period of 1819-20 was one of great depression and distress. Many a one who had lately been independent and thrifty lost by misplaced confidence in some bank or through the failure of a friend whose notes he had indorsed, or a brother, son, or father who must be shielded from imprisonment. They who went surety for others smarted for it. Even for him who stood clear, the maxim was to hoard and wait. Trade was for the present prostrate and profitless; and capital which had earned ten per cent. on good security had

to content itself with four or five. Benton, whose impressions were derived at the far west, has recalled these years as an era of gloom and agony; with no price for produce and property, no sales except by the marshal and sheriff, and no purchaser except the creditor and some hoarder of money; with stop laws, property laws, replevin laws, stay laws, the intervention between debtor and creditor, constituting the chief business of legislation; with no medium of exchange except depreciated paper, and inland exchanges utterly deranged. Even silver change was scarce in these days; and while at the chief centres of trade prices were accommodated to the small Spanish 6¼ and 12½ cent coins, little tickets or bits of foul paper, marked with numerals and signed by the baker or grocer, served as fractional currency in the remote interior. All this prevailing distress gave of necessity an acrid flavor to whatever public question might provoke a controversy, as we shall presently see. But we find it alleviated by that spirit of voluntary and sympathetic co-operation which is after all the excellent trait of our republican life; co-operation in present succor for the unfortunate, in benevolent works, in devising the intelligent means of recuperating.

For the present, and, indeed, during Monroe's long administration through two terms, Spain and Spanish American affairs supplied the chief, in fact, almost the only element of excitement in our foreign relations. A few niggardly favors reciprocated with other European powers for the passing benefit of commerce, other more tangible advantages sought on our behalf but refused, —this tells the rest of the tale of diplomacy. But the

absorption of Spanish territory in our Union under the Florida treaty, and the ultimate fate of the South American colonies, aroused the passions of the hour; and European countries and the United States keenly watched the progress of the patriot struggle in the southern continent, not only with those diverse sympathies which result from political differences of creed, but with the consciousness of diverse interests, such as might eventually lead neutral powers into rival combinations, sooner or later, for the purpose of bringing about the differing results hoped for. Spain was at this juncture mistress neither of the situation nor herself; nevertheless, mutual conferences of the allied powers which had brought the European war to a successful close dictated her course as to Spanish America, at the same time checkmating the schemes of one another. In these conferences England took the lead, and to make that lead the more positive in favor of a solution which, well worked out, promised a decided enlargement of British commerce with the New World, her ministry favored more and more the idea of fellowship and a friendly co-operation with the United States; for we were a rising power whose interests and feelings tended, like those of our mother-country, to counteract those of narrow-minded continental sovereigns who were jealous of great navies and stubbornly opposed to all governments which professed a leaning to public opinion.

Before entering upon the narrative of the Missouri controversy and its immediate results, let us briefly sketch the progress of our anti-slavery cause to 1819. There had been no serious agitation of the dreaded topic

since the African slave trade was abolished in 1808. With that unanimous and happy fulfilment of a constitutional opportunity, patriots would fain have thought their duty done, and trusted the rest to a favoring Providence, whose approval they felt. But to stop the supply of Africans from abroad was like clipping but one root from a weed which was still strongly imbedded in the soil, and might grow and propagate in other directions. The population of the United States increased after the act of 1808, as previously, at an average rate of about one-third in ten years; and if the whites had multiplied in numbers during the last decade the blacks themselves had kept not uneven pace. Confronted with this inner phase of the unsolved problem, the philanthropic spirit of the age turned, after war had ceased, to the possibilities of amalgamation, or, as more fairly styled, political incorporation, which Jefferson and his school of benefactors had always treated with a tender abhorrence. What was to be the ultimate relation of the black and white races should they grow on together under the progressive institutions of a republic surely great in destiny? Or could those races, together with the red, become so disconnected as to leave to Americans not only a white man's government, but a white man's country?

One point had always been ceded without contention: namely, that each of the original States, and of those others since admitted into the Union, unfettered by fundamental restraints imposed by Congress, was sovereign over the institution within its own borders. The State could abolish or perpetuate slavery at discretion where it already existed, besides regulating the condition of blacks within the jurisdiction, whether bond or free. Accepting this premise, the free States had loy-

ally refrained from trespassing upon the rights of those already wedded to slavery; a conscience-smitten minority of their inhabitants resorting perhaps to mild remonstrance and exhortation, but the majority justifying apathy and inaction by putting the national responsibility upon the planters, somewhat as did planters of the day themselves upon their British ancestors. More than this, fugitive slaves who escaped into a free State were surrendered on the claim of the white owner; not without some pang of remorse, we may be sure, nor without a lurking fear lest some free black should be smuggled, because of his skin, into bondage; but for the imperious reason that the constitution of the United States, the charter of our own liberties, must be obeyed. And yet while fugitive slave laws might have been pronounced in 1789, or when that constitution went into effect, as really for the general benefit of adjacent States, a singular geographical change had since taken place. In fact, the original lines had since become so contracted while we pushed westward to the Mississippi, that at present, thirty years later, an anti-slavery and pro-slavery tier of States confronted one another from behind a long parallel; a real presage that when obedience to the constitution became sullen, those laws would be trampled on, and two sections of the Union, socially dissimilar and even repugnant, would occupy a relative attitude surely inviting civil war and bloodshed. The anti-slavery band of States voluntarily choosing freedom was already completed; New York having in 1817 proclaimed the total abolition of slavery within its borders to be completed by July 4, 1827. So on the other side had the pro-slavery States drawn closer together, united by common traditions, common blood, and the common pursuit of staple agriculture

through the great South, to protect, if not propagate, a system which they knew the voice of modern civilization condemned, but which to them meant for the present social order, stability, property, life itself, and the means of living. For the Union had never said to a State, "Emancipate and we will indemnify you;" but "Emancipate and bear your own loss." There was a southern conscience; nevertheless the dread of an unshared impoverishment in order to please mankind stifled its voice.

Abolition by sovereign will of a slave State now ceased, and as for enslavement by a free State's legislation, this had never been attempted. Mild persuasion had done its work. Freedom called her roll at the north; slavery hers at the south; and compulsion on the national behalf being impossible, the Union left each section, or rather each sovereign member thereof, to its own independent action; limiting national exertions, first to making good the slave-trade prohibition, and next to forfending slavery from the soil of our virgin territories; for thus did the constitution as it stood circumscribe Congress.

To the natural instinct which had drawn together so closely the southern staple-producing States for mutual protection was added a propagating zeal now displayed by enthusiasts of that section, and much stimulated of late by the immense consumption of cotton and cotton fabrics in the world's market. South Carolina, Georgia, and the adjacent States fed those noisy spindles which in the mother-country and here multiplied so rapidly that the annual production ill satisfied their hungry maw. The advanced price of cotton and other staples, such as rice and sugar, which necessitated toil in the broiling sun and exposure such as only blacks

could well endure, had created, therefore, an unprecedented demand for suitable lands for their culture and suitable laborers to till them.

Hence an obvious tendency in States thus interested to band together, not only with a fixed purpose to resist emancipation, but so as to procure slaves wherever they might without open offence to other Christian communities. Hence, too, an invention by the staple raiser of various sophistries which might prop up the institution and palliate the guilt of slaveholding, if guilt it must be called; none of them at this time more popular or more pernicious than that to spread our domestic slavery over a larger surface of land would alleviate the mischief. For, conceding with Jefferson that to move a slave from one State to another would make no slave of a human being who was not a slave before, what must be the logical result of spreading the contagious ambition, or rather the social necessity, of being a white slaveholder, through new settlements, but to further the propagation of slaves, in order to gratify that ambition or social necessity? And admitting an increased propagation, who will ask whether the supply comes by breeding or importation?

It deserves, however, to be said of a statesman whose influence in moulding American character was so remarkable that even his erroneous maxims, of which this was one, crept into common speech, that Jefferson did not to his dying day cease to deplore the existence of slavery, nor did he believe in African colonization as an adequate means of ridding the United States of the system. To him the association which prosecuted this undertaking was no more than a missionary society, having humane and unaggressive ends. Those ends theoretically he favored; and emancipation still

captivated his fancy, notwithstanding the alluring influences of plantation surroundings benumbed his judgment, and he became less of an abolitionist to be more of a southerner.

We are now prepared to enter upon the narrative of the Missouri controversy, precursor by two generations of probably the grandest and saddest civil strife recorded in the annals of the nineteenth century. Fought out and settled upon the legislative arena at Washington, though agitating our whole people meanwhile, this earlier controversy covered three distinct spaces of time: (1) The second session of the 15th Congress; (2) the first session; and (3) the second session of the 16th Congress. The immediate question at issue concerned the admission of Missouri into the Union as a State, released from territorial constraints. But under the circumstances this question involved another of transcendent magnitude; namely, whether the great northwest territory comprised in the Louisiana purchase should be consecrated to freedom or desecrated by slavery. For as the case stood at the outset, were Missouri now to be admitted into the Union with permissive slavery, simply because a majority of its inhabitants so desired, Congress abdicated all constitutional control in this respect over territory purchased and paid for by the United States, in favor of a sort of squatter sovereignty among the settlers.

Viewed from the standpoint of a stern morality, the Missouri Compromise must be pronounced a surrender to the slave power, the cowardly abandonment of a cause and occasion for which northern men might as well have drawn the sword then as did 1820.

their posterity forty years later. But this point of view is not just to the honor and statesmanship of the times. The political evil was inherent in the constitution itself, which brought States slaveholding and non-slaveholding into indissoluble bonds, providing no radical means for assimilating their condition. The anti-slavery spirit of 1776 had died out, or rather had exhausted its power of persuading States to emancipate; a border line separated already the free and slave sections; and to extend that line beyond the Mississippi and ultimately to the Pacific had at length become a political necessity, with civil war for the only alternative. Latitude 36° 30′ was not the established parallel throughout, though had Virginia followed the impulse of her better days it might have been, and it fairly marked the division of the Union at the cotton belt. In procuring the establishment of that parallel, freedom gained the first real territorial victory it had won since the adoption of the constitution; for the renown of the Ordinance of 1787 belongs justly to the old Continental Congress. This was a victory worth all the agitation it cost, and securing a new northwest territory to freedom. Whether a greater area might not have been rescued from bondage without hazarding fratricide and disunion we cannot assume to judge; perhaps the north would well have pressed opposition to the Missouri bill long enough to see whether the south would not yield the whole remnant of the territory, Arkansas included; but it is certain that the Trimble amendment, which offered to test this point, was voted down in the Senate. Nor, in justice to the southern compromisers, should the ambiguous "forever," over which Monroe's cabinet differed so greatly, be taken for trickery. Not a State of this Union which once emancipated ever restored sla-

very afterwards or made serious attempt to do so; not one of the new States carved out of western territory once pledged to freedom ever deliberately as a State broke the fundamental terms upon which its admission was granted. The real mischiefs which the Missouri Compromise engendered were these: the strife for political power between slavery and freedom which it sanctioned and perpetuated upon the broad national domain; the insatiate appetite for foreign acquisitions south of that line, whether by war or purchase, which it whetted; and finally, by suffering an immense State like Missouri, whose population near the confluence of the Mississippi and Missouri rivers was sure to increase rapidly, to be set above the geographical latitude, the license it gave to the wolves of slavery to ravage among the scattered free soil settlers over its borders. Nevertheless this sectional compact was faithfully sustained for more than thirty years; it was broken at length not by those who had bound themselves to keep it, but by degenerate sons of freedom, by disciples also of the John Randolph school who constantly stirred the south to believe that slavery should accept no territorial restraints at all. That perfidious rupture, as our later history will show, brought the north once more to its feet, as no other aggression of its rights could have done, and re-established party opposition on the geographical line; the south once more opposing its solid phalanx, for the preservation of its common interests, until crushed in the unequal contest thus provoked. Slavery and slaveholders went down in the dust together, and the American constitution became, what it never had been before, a charter of universal freedom.

CHAPTER XI.

SECOND ADMINISTRATION OF JAMES MONROE.

§ I. Period of Seventeenth Congress. March 4, 1821-March 3, 1823.—§ II. Period of Eighteenth Congress. March 4, 1823-March 3, 1825.

IN Monroe we had a national leader to whom growth and experience meant everything, and whose acquirements as a statesman, though not shining, were solid. He was ambitious of a good record; he aimed to set an example; but at the same time he was modest for his personal fame, called himself an instrument, and cared more to fulfil than be a figure. He wrought out his best work in silence, "investigating by the midnight lamp the laws of nature and nations;" he surrounded himself with the ablest advisers, sought their counsel, and encouraged their confidence. He was at this last and best epoch of his long public career patient, tolerant, very slow but remarkably correct in conclusions, magnanimous and considerate. As chief magistrate he took broad and lofty views of public policy; as a man he was, as he had ever been, the soul of honor. He had a quiet energy in directing affairs. His judgment, fallible enough while young and in bad company, had at length ripened into something like excellence of discernment, as even they admitted who had affected to despise his talents. Experience and singular vicissitude, so far from curdling, sweetened a tem-

per naturally hasty and irritable, and his justice was always tempered with mercy.

Not original in his cast of mind, and always liable to be underrated, Monroe owed his high station less to dazzling superiority than his own unflinching perseverance; something, doubtless, to friendship and opportunity, yet more to that sympathy which all feel when one who is seen to fall rises again. Often had he broken his wing against the precipice upon which he now perched so serenely. His firmness yielded to no obstacle, and his ideal of statesmanship was constantly nobler.

Of Monroe's traits, these, perhaps, gave to his administration its chief influence: the conscientious performance of official duty, magnanimity, and the habit of deliberation. As to the first, all are familiar with Jefferson's description of him as one whose whole soul might be turned wrong side outward without discovering a blemish to the world. Of his rare magnanimity instances are scattered through this whole eight years' record. Daschkoff, who had behaved very badly, was graciously treated when he took his leave; Crawford was not dropped; Jackson's indiscretions were lightly passed over; and Clay, after four years of factious disturbance, had to own an act of unexpected generosity. Indeed, so unsparing a critic as John Quincy Adams remarks that Monroe's failings leaned to virtue's side, that he indulged everybody, was scrupulously regardful of individual feeling, and exercised too reluctantly the power of harsh discipline and censure. He certainly was open and unsuspecting, and betrayed a sensation of pain whenever misconduct in those about him was pointed out. But he was so solicitous not to use the public patronage as his own that many said of him that

he had appointed his enemies to office in preference to his friends.

Long used though he had been to public affairs, and robust in constitution, Monroe worried much in private over difficult problems or a passing discontent. He did not easily throw off official burdens, and when a weighty matter of state was pending the counsellor who called could not divert his mind; for he would revert to the subject still uppermost, and take new advice upon its present bearings, leaving the lighter business to wait, instead of dispatching all together. Many a lonely and serious hour did Monroe pass when troubled or perplexed, veiling the deeper sufferings of his sensitive nature from the world. Nevertheless he hid his wounds as a chief magistrate should; and though wavering often while making up his mind, he was firm when the decision was taken. He came to a conclusion at last, and then stood fearlessly by the consequences. "He had," says Calhoun, "a wonderful intellectual patience, and could, above all men that I ever knew, when called on to decide on an important point, hold the subject immovably fixed under his attention till he had mastered it in all its relations. It was mainly to this admirable quality that he owed his highly accurate judgment. I have known many much more rapid in reaching the conclusion, but very few with a certainty so unerring."

Standing, nevertheless, like a breakwater, between the passions of an earlier and later epoch, it cannot be thought strange if the fibre of Monroe's greatness should not in our day be well known or appreciated. Even contemporaries who recalled him as a devoted and often indiscreet partisan in early life, an anti-Federalist in 1787, one so enthusiastic in 1795 over the

French republic as to join in the fraternal *accolade,* now petulant, now despondent, now almost vindictive, were slow to believe that he had grown into so great a man. But his soundness was fundamental and its secret spring diligent application.

Monroe, though liberally educated, was no scholar. His tastes inclined neither to literature nor philosophy, but were absorbed in politics. He read few books on light subjects, but learned chiefly from personal experience and intercourse among men, and was most interested in whatever might subserve the immediate purpose. During his long service at home and abroad he had made himself familiar with the affairs of Europe and his own country. Among ideas presented and the motives for offering them, he discriminated admirably. One found him in conversation agreeable but not striking, slightly reserved, often grave, and in fact preoccupied with his official cares. He wrote kindly and discreetly in his private letters, but seldom in a lively strain, unless vindication of motives was the object, and then he was almost eloquent. Of official documents he prepared many, full of argument, at times very able, but devoid of imagination and often prosy.

At this interval of sixty years or more, scarce a tradition can be found as to how Monroe looked, what he said unofficially, or how he conducted himself; and yet he made extensive tours while President, and was seen and beloved by all. Cabinet advisers preserve executive traits, it is true, but scarcely more. The inference is that there was nothing odd, nothing striking about his manners or personal appearance. Living for nearly fifteen consecutive years at Washington city, either as Secretary or President, he passed from prime to old age in the midst of its inhabitants.

By these he is best recalled as a handsome man of tall, erect figure and placid mien, who rode every day on horseback with a colored groom after him; his dress a drab suit, with light pantaloons reaching to the knees, a dark beaver hat and white top boots. His hair was cut short in front and powdered and gathered into a queue behind, and his face smoothly shaved after the custom of olden times. For evening costume he wore various suits, after the fashion of the day, tending, however, to the old style, as became one of his years and station. He was strongly built, broad-shouldered, and in younger days could bear great strain without fatigue.

A favorite picture represents Monroe in his prime, enveloped in a dark, high-cut coat of the period, with rolling and indented collar, a waistcoat edged with buff lining, and an ample white neck-cloth spreading its folds over his chest. The face wears a mild, patient, and yet almost sad expression, indicating the struggle of a nervous temperament; the eyes, nearly blue, look from the canvas with kindness more than penetration; and the small, close mouth and dimpled chin learning to be firm, the smooth face, the high but not expansive forehead and delicate features, all bespeak a refinement of nature. Later in life his appearance is said to have been less romantic and prepossessing. Stouter, more florid, inclined to stoop, his stature by the last years of his Presidency might have seemed quite moderate. His dress is now described as a little rusty, and his countenance wilted with age and study and care; while, in a forehead deeply furrowed, which the hair, as worn, partly hid, appeared two distinct arches over the eyes, which glimmered sleepily from within their large sockets. Indeed, Monroe's last years were full of care and

anxiety, and at seventy he seemed fourscore. But those manners which neither captivated nor overawed were the same at his last White House reception as long years back, when governor of Virginia; and the same awkward but assiduous courtesy which the "British Spy" had remarked, was visible through all the polish of courtly life; affording one proof among many that Monroe never could outgrow his native simplicity.

The reader is not to measure the festivities of this raw little metropolis, which brought together so attractive a winter society from all parts of the Union, by the standard of its own diluted and even desolate grandeur. Though it slowly grew and clambered up the great trellis placed for its reception, like some neglected vine which shivers and yet strives to fulfil the law of its being, Washington, the nation's only plant, had ceased to be an object of enthusiasm to patriot or speculator. It had no commerce, its inhabitants showed little enterprise, trade was held in disdain by the influential, and the spirit of civic co-operation was wanting. Nothing could be done for it without the assent of Congress; and being to most intents a southern city, here might be seen the slave-block and auction-room, while scattered huts in remote quarters gave the place the air of some negro village. Fine sloping fields and ridges, once covered with clustering trees which might have made a splendid park but had long since been felled for fuel, were disfigured by streets and avenues only partially opened and blocks of cheap and ugly brick houses standing aloof from one another. Pennsylvania Avenue was the chief thoroughfare, its two-story buildings serving the double purpose of dwelling

and shop. The Capitol and President's mansion were almost the only structures really agreeable to the eye, nor were these yet finished; but in the neighborhood of the latter were a few pretentious residences. A rural neighborhood changing into a civic is rarely attractive, nature upturning that art may begin; but stagnation just at that transition point makes the loveliest landscape an eyesore. And so it was here. Cattle grazed along the public reservations; goats from some lofty height scanned the square, carefully plotted, whose owners would gladly have sold by the acre for the price they had paid by the foot; snakes two feet long wriggled into a cabinet officer's mansion, and were killed at the foot of the staircase. On the broad Potomac, seldom furrowed by a keel, statesmen swam for daily exercise unmolested. By old Maryland records it was shown—strange coincidence!—that part of the land on which stood this ambitious city was once called Rome, and its creek Tiber; and hence Moore's sarcastic line,—

"And what was Goose Creek once is Tiber now."

Marrying Marcia Burns, the heiress of Washington, with whose stubborn father our first President drove a negotiation almost as difficult as any Indian treaty, Van Ness, once a member of Congress, had identified himself with the place; and improving a square near the juncture of the Tiber and Potomac and our new Washington obelisk, he built a spacious mansion in the centre of the square, not far from the President's house. A fine suburban house and grounds, lying just northwest of the city, the home originally of the Homeric Barlow, was known as "Kalorama." But Barlow himself had not stayed there long, nor could Washington greatly attract literary and studious men as yet. In 1798 every

government which would build a house for its resident minister might have a free lot; but only Portugal accepted the offer, and the lot assigned was not yet built upon. So expansive were the distances that it might still be said that neighbors had to go through the woods to make their visits. Roads were unpaved, badly kept, often impassable in winter and spring; and opposite the Treasury building might be seen a famous slough, into which a carriage-load of statesmen had been emptied not long since. In very hot weather came myriads of flies and vermin; but by that time Congress had usually risen, and few were left except clerks in the government employ, mechanics, tradespeople, and some very diligent officials of high grade who bore umbrellas. Taverns and saloons were grog-shops, about equally disreputable, though Gadsby's, near the Capitol, became a hotel of some pretence; and as few Congressmen or visitors could own or rent a dwelling, boarding-houses were much in demand; and after this fashion public men would lodge like a family, leaving their wives at home, and making a "mess," as it was called. Each boarding-house had its mess, to which no stranger was admitted without the common consent and an introduction.

In such a metropolis, where appetites abounded, with slim means for gratifying them, the haunts of vice found very little gilding. Wretched drinking shops, brothels, and gambling-houses abounded; and it seemed as if the polluted dregs of other cities were emptied here every winter. But theatrical shows and concerts derived little patronage from pleasure-seekers amid the round of social entertainments at the height of a winter season. In 1820, when the city charter was carefully amended, much commotion arose over the municipal

offices, and the most eminent residents of the place contended for the honor of serving as "lord mayor;" but except for acts which enabled the corporation to drain the low grounds and keep streets and alleys in better order, Congress manifested very little interest. The District militia, a well-trained body, had been of positive service during the war. Clumsy provision was made for administering local justice; but up to 1830, so little revision had been made of the old Maryland or Virginia laws in force when cession was made to the United States, that one who set fire to a mansion-house or stole a horse was liable to be hanged for it. As for that only thoroughfare in Washington city worthy of the name, the poplar-lined avenue lying between the Capitol and the White House, a House Committee was debating as late as 1832 whether to permit a pavement of round or pounded stones to be laid. By February, 1830, the United States had here expended upon national buildings about $3,229,000, and upon all other objects within the District, including streets, avenues, squares, a court-house, jails, a penitentiary, and a public burying-ground, less than $187,000. Forced to the mean necessity of applying for everything to a busy legislature of non-residents, wherein the local tax-payers found no representation at all, the District became literally a beggar, and begging in vain so often, it subsided from an eager into a shiftless one. The capital city was the nation's only child; surely the parent was at fault for rearing an offspring in the pride and poverty of great expectations.

Here gathered each winter season a medley of distinguished characters, beautiful women, travellers, and social celebrities from all parts of the Union. After all, there was something cosmopolitan in such a society,

softening the provincial lines, and in the universal wish to be pleasant and pleased, encouraging a free-handed and even hearty hospitality. The influence of the southern aristocracy at this time dominated, but always affably and generously unless southern institutions happened to be discussed. Fond of treating and apt to be profuse, these hosts easily seemed richer than they were. It was the exact and thrifty, those who knew how each dollar was won and spent, that least suited the habits of the place. In order to bear high office at Washington and please this gay winter society, one had to be genial with everybody, and as for cost, calculate nothing. The arrival of Congress was a signal for commencing the round of entertainment, which lasted through the session, but chiefly, as is still the custom, between New Year's Day and Ash-Wednesday.

The census of 1820 showed an aggregate population in the United States which consisted in round numbers of 9,634,000, against 7,240,000 in 1810; the whites numbering 7,862,000, the slaves 1,538,000, and the free persons of color 234,000. War, with its usual decimation by disease and death, and the check it places upon matrimony, not to add the failure of immigration for some three years in consequence, had brought the relative increase on the whole somewhat below the former average, though returning peace now repaired all breaches very rapidly. Since 1810 six new States had been added to the Union, a feat of national fecundity without a parallel in our history. This changed in no slight degree the adjustment of political forces, into which a thousand delicate elements might enter. Already was the sceptre of national leadership passing into

new hands. Virginia, with all her slaves to swell a master's dignity, was at length outnumbered in population by the freemen of New York, a State whose ensigns advanced as first in rank and emulous of empire, in the material if not the sentimental sense of the word. Behind pushed Pennsylvania with sturdy step, crowding close upon her late preceptor, and soon, too, to pass her by. Ohio, hoydenish in politics, hastened to be next in numerical order, ranking the third already, or next to Pennsylvania for representative power. Only by the count of soul by soul, regardless of color and social condition,—a count wholly fallacious for the adjustment of political rank and influence under our constitution as then applied,—could Virginia, once first, claim still to be the second State of the Union; and even under so favorable a comparison it was clearly written that she would soon sink to the fourth and lower still, as one enterprising free State after another outstripped her in the race and passed on.

New York's rapid advance in wealth and numbers was easily accounted for. The constantly increasing trade of her great seaport, already, perhaps, the second emporium of foreign commerce in the world, was enhanced immensely by the timely adoption of a wise, liberal, and for the times immense system of internal improvement, all without the aid of the national purse, by means of which the whole back country of a State, remarkably favored by nature for the united and exclusive development of its commercial resources, was rapidly peopled, and a means of traffic, cheap and expeditious beyond all precedent, laid open for the products of the rising west. What sons admirably qualified for public station had done so much for their own State, and so little for the Union, as the Clintons and the

Livingstons of New York? Aided by Chancellor Livingston, Fulton had given to the Hudson and the modern world the first steamboat and the first surprising instance of quick locomotion. And now to the busy Hudson a Clinton was uniting by an artificial watercourse the waters of Lake Erie; thus making of the whole State, as it were, a vast channel through which products should pour into the lap of New York City for distribution, enriching its trade beyond measure; besides giving to a hundred towns and villages on the way a generous livelihood.

Calhoun was yet a young man, only forty years of age, and though bony and slender, far different in personal aspect from that rigid, scornful, and bloodless being, who in later life held his State and section spellbound by a mysterious but malignant influence. He was one of those dreamy-looking men whose presence haunts the imagination like a verse of poetry. With a face both thoughtful and handsome, flashing brown eyes full of penetration, dark hair waving carelessly over his high, broad forehead, an intellect which stimulated, and most engaging manners, he was fascinating to the last degree, and after a method quite his own. His views were original and confidently expressed. Timidity and doubt seemed no part of his nature. Adams and Jackson, both much older men and in some respects as unlike each other as the poles, felt the charm of his intercourse; yet, not without profound distrust of his sincerity upon a closer acquaintance. Monroe, however, loved him, and one may believe him to have been of a lovable and responsive nature until corroded and consumed by ambition. Younger men than him-

self, those especially who were likely to rise to influence, he held by delicate flattery and instilled into their minds his political precepts. But his philosophy exacted from the pupil a state of mind open somewhat to magic and delusion; for he himself led by a chain of logic whose end and beginning he had neither the patience nor the love of truth, for truth's own sake, to search out. His intellect, which was intense and ingenious, delighted in novelties, bold contrasts, and startling conclusions; but like one who carries a torch through a cavern, he took his way heedless of dimensions or structure. He had been trained in youth too quickly, and was launched into public life before mastering a profession. The drudgery of investigation he disliked; but trusted to intuition, the lightning-glance. Hence in Calhoun as a statesman great talents and great faults grew up together. He has been considered pure, upright, faithful to his convictions. He was, most unquestionably, a bold and independent thinker; and as for morals, had been brought up under strict Presbyterian influences, to which were superadded those of Yale College, where he took his degree. But his convictions were formed upon such quicksands, he was so little disposed to search things to the bottom, that ambition soon became an infatuation, burning out Calhoun's better part, though by a slow process. When the fever went down it left his nature passionless, destructive, deadly, mischievous. Now that it began, something noble and national could be discovered in his ambition; yet he showed himself lax, wayward, inclined to get upon the winning side, and above all to win for himself. Adams, who never in the world did Calhoun an injury, found him, with the professions of friendship yet moist upon his lips, just as ready, while thus

fired, to assail him before the public as ever he had done Crawford.

The secret despatches received from our minister at London excited in the official circle of Washington a profound interest. Rush's conduct was at the same time highly approved. "You could not have met Canning's proposals better," the President wrote him, "if you had had the whole American cabinet at your right hand." First of all, Monroe by letter consulted Jefferson and Madison in confidence upon the momentous question thus presented. Jefferson with quick enthusiasm approved the idea of a joint co-operation with Great Britain against the plans of the Alliance in this western hemisphere; sketching boldly the outlines of an American system, not Great Britain's but ours, of "keeping out of our land all foreign powers, of never permitting those of Europe to intermeddle with the affairs of our nations;" and arguing that to draw over to our side at this crisis the most powerful member of Europe would be to maintain our principle, not to depart from it, to prevent instead of provoking war. Madison's mind yielded assent less easily to the proposals of a minister whose roughness he well remembered; and concurring with Jefferson in the main, though cautiously, he vexed his mind again and again to discover some astute motive behind Canning's smooth approaches. 1823. October.

Fortified by these opinions, Monroe prepared the most remarkable document of his official career; an annual message with paragraphs which he well knew would be read and pondered over by every cabinet and legislative body in Europe and the western world, as

well as by the Congress to whom his message was addressed. The draft he showed to his advisers, but conferred with them calmly, as one who had made up his own mind. Wirt was timorous, Calhoun open to conviction, Adams bold as a lion. The news that Cadiz had surrendered produced upon Calhoun, at least, a momentary panic. But the President, whose experience in European diplomacy we should remember was greater than that of all his cabinet, felt confident of his ground. He had determined neither on the one hand to provoke the Alliance by a tone of taunting defiance, nor on the other give this country the appearance of taking a position subordinate to Great Britain. As to British proposals, indeed, it was conceded that Rush's ground was the true one. We were stronger, knowing that Great Britain opposed the Alliance as we did; but unless Canning would pledge his government to recognize South American independence no immediate co-operation appeared possible.

The President's message of December, 1823, toned down from the solemn exordium of the draft, which Adams feared would alarm our people like a clap of thunder, and seem like a summons to arms, put forward, therefore, two distinct declarations. One bore directly against the plans of hostile intervention cherished by the Holy Alliance in the flush of victory: "that we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety." The other, as a more general proposition, involving the rights and interests of the United States: "that the American continents, by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintain, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any Euro-

pean powers." In these two propositions consist the celebrated "Monroe doctrine;" a doctrine, we may add, which our later statesmen have developed at convenience, linking it inseparably with the name of the President who thus pronounced it, and seeing in it what many hundred millions of American freemen, in the long vista of coming centuries, will still better recognize, if free institutions are capable of growth and endurance, the sacred stone of chartered liberty in this western world.

This doctrine, so profound of import, was not, we apprehend, the sudden creation of individual thought, but the result rather of slow processes in our public mind, which had been constantly intent upon problems of self-government, and intensely observant of our continental surroundings; though carried forward, no doubt, like other ideas in the colonial epoch, by the energy and clearer conviction of statesmen who could foresee and link conceptions into a logical chain. Neutrality as to European affairs, freedom from all entangling alliances with the Old World, was the legacy of experience which Washington bequeathed to his successors. This might have seemed at first to discourage all external influence, and remit our Union to the selfish and isolated pursuit of its own interests. But the annexation of Louisiana proved that the Union itself was destined to expand over an uncertain area of this continent. And when, inspired by our example, the Spanish colonies of the American continent were seen one after another to shake off the yoke of the parent country, and spontaneously assert their independence, the philanthropic leaders—and none among them so quickly or so persistently as Jefferson—began to predict the fraternal co-operation in the future of these free repub-

lics, all modelled alike, in a common scheme for self-preservation which should shut out Europe, its rulers and its systems of monarchy, forever from this hemisphere. For by such means only could the germ of self-government expand, and the luxuriant growth of this hardy plant make it impossible that the monarchical idea should ever strike a deep root in American soil. By 1823, then, the new maxim as a fundamental one was by no means unfamiliar to our political leaders. Sympathy for sister-republics, as well as self-interest, imposed upon the United States the announcement of that maxim. When liberty struggled in America we were not—we could not be—neutral. The time of announcement and the choice of expression, nevertheless, awaited events. Pending that announcement, Clay, the ardent champion of the Spanish American cause, made speeches in his own State, which brought out the principle in terms not less striking than any which Adams has preserved in his Diary. The time for the announcement was when, following close upon our acceptance of these American republics as independent States, the Holy Alliance threatened to overturn them. Did a President in the bosom confidence of Jefferson and Madison, who had conducted the portfolio of State for years before his latest promotion, need to take his ideas from any subordinate? Allowing, therefore, to Adams his full praise as an adviser in this emergency, and giving to the choice of words for defining a well-understood policy whatever merit it may deserve, we may remark that the calm, dull phraseology of this message is sufficiently in the Presidential vein to deserve the epithet original in the most liberal sense usually applied to State papers. It was the courage of a great people personified in a firm chief magistrate that

put the fire into those few momentous though moderate sentences, and made them glow like the writing at Belshazzar's feast.

Monroe meant neither that the United States should monopolize the New World, nor that we should fight single-handed the battles of sister-republics; a policy of consummate statesmanship could not in such hands have been perverted into one of consummate statecraft. The danger was near our door and he repelled it. Threat was opposed by threat, and a course of policy laid open whose direction the future would determine. It is not, then, the genius of creating which belongs to Monroe, but, as with most great administrators, the genius of apprehending, of taking the immediate responsibility; and rarely, if ever, has responsibility been assumed, under the constitutional system of these United States, by any Executive so utterly apart from the sanction of the legislature. A Presidential dictum has passed into the fundamental law of American diplomacy. And this crowning effort of Monroe's career contrasted well with that to which it stood opposed; for the main motive was to shelter honorably these tender blossoms of liberty on kindred soil from the cold Siberian blast of despotism.

With tariff debates and the tariff act of 1824 the vista of new national parties opens. Not yet did Clay and Webster come into that alliance, which in combining the sympathetic with the intellectual school of oratory, the power of exhortation with that of matchless argument, was the most remarkable ever made in any deliberative body of this western world. Clay could introduce and manage a bill or resolution, while

Webster made the best speech in favor of adopting it. Both inclined to a strong central government and the broad construction of national powers, though brought up in opposite political schools,—Clay as a Republican, Webster as a Federalist. In influence and methods they were the complement of each other. Clay was ardent, sympathetic, a man to be loved and fought for, in spite of all blemishes. If he missed fire once, he was to be tried again; he made the warmest friends and the bitterest enemies. Webster, on the other hand, seldom made enemies, standing, as he did, on a higher and more solitary plane, less approachable by friend or foe. The quality of his greatness was supremely intellectual; men thought him infallible, almost superhuman; worship was the frenzy he excited in the popular breast, and thousands who literally idolized him believed him free from the common temptations of public life and the self-absorption of its ambitions. In these purer years of his career his soar was like the eagle's and his rising sun a glorious birth. No one who has seen and heard Daniel Webster in his prime can liken his oratory or his personal presence to that of any other mortal man. Chaste, simple, compact, but strong, moving in one grand and steady current, onward, right onward, his speech gathered volume as he warmed with the theme, until a magnificent torrent bore down all before it. The stream that widens to a river or the regiment that swells to a host—such metaphors only can describe his progress to a climax. No man so rose to the grandeur of an occasion. But however impassioned the effect produced, the orator was himself cool, self-controlled, and always deliberate; for he seemed somehow to possess Prospero's magic art, so as to create a tempest by a wave of the wand, confident

that he could calm it when he was ready. His power of statement was remarkable. Force and utterance he relied upon as qualities to produce conviction, but clearness equally. His strong and rugged sentences, Anglo-Saxon in the phrasing and choice of words, relieved the burden of argument in the loftier passages by bold imagery draped in the language of the master poets,—Milton above all,—of whom Webster showed himself a close student, without the slightest appearance of pedantry; not only quoting, as he might, a couplet, so as to be brief, but so transfusing the substance of immortal verse into the diction of his own speech that a prose utterance rang out with the music of a sublime harmony. Of statesmen no one but Burke has left speeches so worthy of rank among the English prose classics; and while Burke, as tradition tells us, rose too often above those he addressed and got tedious, Webster spoke to the time and occasion, and carried his audience to the close. The views which Webster announced were of the broad and elevating kind, and instead of picking an adversary's speech to pieces he preferred to set forth the main facts and principles as he viewed them, and rest his argument upon vital and essential points, which the luminous process of his mind enabled him to discover and set apart. If there was art in all this, he was discreet enough to conceal it, and no one opposed to him could complain that he was utterly uncandid, still less uncivil. To crown all, Webster's overpowering presence and manner, as every American knows, gave weight to the commonest remark which might escape his lips, and deepened immeasurably the effect of an eloquence which surely needed the aid of no meretricious trick or illusion. To this grave, swarthy, massive, and majestic lion of a man, who moved among a

thousand with an easy consciousness of superiority, mental and physical, and who, in the plenitude of his powers, could not stop before a shop-window without drawing a crowd to gaze, awe-stricken, upon him, the epithets "Olympian," "god-like," were freely applied, and with the most obvious aptitude. Had he stood in the market square, raised an arm, and frozen into silence, his erect figure would have been accepted as the bronze ideal of statesman and defender of the constitution. Clay's agile craft seemed light in comparison when this great American man-of-war bore down, full rigged, before the wind, with spreading sail and ponderous tonnage, crowding all canvas, and flying the stars and stripes fearlessly at the fore. Those stars and stripes were very dear to Webster, for love of the Union gave the best inspiration to his public career. He was in every fibre an American patriot; and entering public life in the service of the United States, on that broad altar, to use his own expression, did he dedicate himself. In temperament he was conservative, like the Massachusetts of that day, and of that juridical type, moreover, which would keep liberty closely protected by law. His whole soul abhorred radical and violent change; nevertheless he progressed. That government is based upon property was, as he asserted, a fundamental maxim; and to benefit property and increase the general wealth and prosperity of the nation constituted perhaps the chief scope of his long statesmanship.

Webster inclined naturally to indolence. But his aspirations were noble, and when aroused his native energy carried him along with great celerity. Gifted with a broad, analytic mind which acquired rapidly, grasped principles, and sifted all details, he treasured

all that was worth remembering; and what he knew he could tell clearly, without risking himself to tell more or venturing beyond his depth. Like other great lawyers, he could not only investigate by the best means when the point arose, but understood perfectly how to absorb the labors of other men. Love of nature and rural sports enriched his personal experience of life, which was great and varied; and carrying, as he wandered on some lonely excursion through the woods, the secret habit of composition, he would, pole in hand, arrange the order of some new oration, or address an eloquent passage to the trout which he jerked out of the brook. Some of his greatest speeches, which seemed to spring from the brain in full panoply, were constructed from memoranda composed in leisure moments and then laid aside.

He was bred and born a Puritan Federalist; and his politics showed always the peculiar training of that school, which, in Boston especially, had a decided tinge of Anglicism. To Gore and other leaders of that party who had befriended his youth Webster owned a personal obligation; but he rose superior to the ancient bigotry, and Jefferson, to whom he paid a visit about this time, spoke with high praise of him. Webster had come to Congress once more thoroughly independent in politics; a middleman, so to speak, and in the present disordered condition of parties and principles, he easily made himself felt.

Peace, prosperity, and the revival of patriotic feeling over Lafayette's visit marked the close of this remarkable administration; the last in fact which linked our people with the Revolutionary age. Monroe's pol-

icy had been a broad one. Within eight years the government had made great strides towards establishing our interests and empire in this continent; we had added the Floridas, planted our flag firmly on the Pacific coast, befriended, first of all nations, the cause of Spain's revolting colonies. To the disdain once shown by European powers had succeeded respect for a nation which had vindicated its policy through peace and war. Upon the enlargement of the map of this Union beyond the confines of the old thirteen, the name of Monroe stands indelibly inscribed. Louisiana spoke, therefore, with a gratitude peculiarly filial in the resolutions of sympathy offered by its legislature upon his retirement. Other legislatures, those, for instance, of Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Alabama, Maryland and South Carolina, dwelt more generally upon his impartial and dignified course, his essential services, and long tried patriotism. Tokens of approval reached the retiring President from men of all political shades. The hoary John Adams congratulated him on the singular felicity of an administration "which, as far as I know, has been without fault." And Marshall wrote in similar strain, "The retrospect is not darkened by a single spot."

Thus peacefully glided to its eight-years' close one of the most serene, dignified, and at the same time successful administrations the world ever saw. For our people this respite from party strife was a beautiful, though passing episode. Party men no longer, they seemed to themselves national men, Americans in a greater sense than they had dreamed possible. The whole mechanism of society moved in perfect order. The democracy ruled, but it was a democracy in which jealousies found no root, and the abler and more vir-

tuous of the community took the lead. None needed to despair; all were cheerful and hopeful. Busy and prospering, each fell happily into his own routine, and was well disposed to those above or below him. To the oppressed of other nations we shone with a steady flame, that our light might be a help and comfort. A breath dissolves this picture; and fiercer passions rule once more the hearts of men. That this ideal government of the people had felt the touch of consecration for the moment was not, however, to be doubted. The people were guided by the silent influence of a lofty example, and walked safely in the clear upper air.

CHAPTER XII.

ADMINISTRATION OF JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

§ I. Period of Nineteenth Congress. March 4, 1825-March 3, 1827.—§ II. Period of Twentieth Congress. March 4, 1827-March 3, 1829.

THE era of good feeling was precisely coeval with Monroe's double term of office. Its impulse, however, in the quickening of the national spirit was carried to a far later date. Nor did party virulence break out into anything like an angry and indecent expression before Lafayette had re-embarked for France and a new Congress listened to the new President's first annual message. Party lines, nevertheless, began to be drawn for 1828, and the political elements to re-combine the moment Monroe retired; and a new and formidable coalition of the disappointed candidates threatened, thwarted, and then overthrew his successor. Hence the most tranquil of administrations was followed, like a thunderclap, by one of the stormiest.

New national parties must inevitably have arisen. But two causes at this time hastened their formation: (1) The clear and vigorous policy which Adams chose to personify in himself; (2) the peculiar circumstances attending his elevation and the choice of his cabinet. These causes, operating together and continually, drove all opponents of the new administration into a natural

coalition, forcing a division line; popular elements, naturally sluggish, leaped into new relations, and a furious struggle for the mastery was the consequence, personal in its inception, but not without developing differences of political principle, as well as of taste or temper, as it proceeded.

As a thorn in the flesh of an unpopular administration, Randolph was not to be despised; and on this account, perhaps, Calhoun bore gently with him, watching from his chair the flow of poesy and vituperation which the rules of the Senate, so he alleged, forbade him to interrupt.

Did Calhoun, as he sat rigid and statue-like in the Vice-President's chair, listening with pale face, lips compressed, and scornful eyes, his thick hair brushed boldly back from his imperious forehead, extract ideas from this tangled monologue for his own political guidance? And had he already begun to reconstruct his theory of American government so as to place the State above the nation? At all events, it is claimed by Randolph's latest biographer* that Randolph himself, even while despised in his own eyes, organized the south as a distinct power, and made Calhoun his convert. With like foresight, it may be added, Calhoun and Randolph, the later and earlier sophist of the pro-slavery school, took care to attach to their persons young men who were likely to rise to influence in their several homes, and, after a fascinating strain which pictured slaveholders as chained to some necessity by a fate which they might deplore but could not avert, set forth the dark issue as one of life or death, wherein every sentiment of chivalry and humanity required two races to be kept, the one above and the other below the other. Each

*See Henry Adams's John Randolph.

set the example of kindness to slaves, and appreciated heartily the simple and childish tenderness which was yielded in return. Each half inclined to emancipate; but each, with characteristic temper, spurned the thought that a southerner's best impulse should be aided from without. What existed must continue to exist, so they argued, and to preserve the existence of slavery was their own right; for never in history had two distinct races occupied the soil together, except as master and slave. State rights afforded thus a barricade whenever the south should be driven to cover; and to consolidate southern influence and the slave power, either for offensive or defensive warfare, as circumstances might demand, was the work which Randolph began and Calhoun completed.

John Quincy Adams, though now at the age of sixty, maintained by temperate habits a full vigor of mind and body. His figure was short and thick, but regular exercise kept it from corpulence. His round, bald head, filled, as the forehead showed, with an active and capacious brain, was set firmly upon square shoulders, conveying at once the impression of honest and fearless dogmatism. His eyes were small, black, and piercing, discerning selfish motives at a glance, however covered up by cunning and hypocrisy, and yet too ready to see the faulty part of men and believe the worst of them, unwilling to indulge harmless flattery or be blinded by good nature; while a troublesome rheum gave sometimes a ludicrous pathos to their severity of expression as though he wept. Under a fringe of thin gray hair and side-whiskers stood out his firm cheek-bones, large mouth and chin, the whole expression of the face that

of self-respect and resolution. To glance at a good portrait of this man is to feel positive that he had his opinion and was prepared to state it. In one picture his hand holds a book, with fingers at the very page and passage wanted; in another his outstretched arm plants a cane, as though to pin his postulate fast to solid earth.

A family resemblance is traceable between the second and sixth Presidents, and at the same time striking differences, both of character and method of administration. Both the Adamses had dignified aims and a just sense of public duty; both looked upon the Presidency as the highest grade of public honor, to be reached by a long, laborious, and honorable approach; a prize to be not less deserved than desired. Both were trained civilians and students of political systems, having illustrious claims upon the common gratitude. But with infinite preparation, both proved unsuccessful political leaders, unsuccessful Presidents, and were cast aside on the nearest opportunity, chiefly because of a peculiar temper, such as unfits one for managing or being managed, but leaves him an individual contending in the midst of surrounding circumstances. Strangely unfortunate circumstances were those in which each accepted the burden of exalted station; but such was the strength of personal character in either instance, that the people learned to honor those they had thrown down. Of these two sons of America, John Adams was the more humane and generous, and John Quincy Adams the more scholarly. The former felt the limitations of a British-born colonist, the subject of a king, though time and experience moulded him into a Republican; the latter was a Republican by instinct and conviction. Adams the elder had a noble heart and went

by its impulses. He clung to his friends, cherished strong likes and dislikes, quarrelled and made up, loved his family, and, when things went pleasantly, gave his light humor full play. He was a man of foibles, and erratic often, under the influence of vanity or wounded pride. But John Quincy Adams, constant in domestic duties, and a model husband, son, and father, found scarcely a tender tie outside his home circle, and all his humor was sardonic, like that of a misanthrope. Both were irritable and impatient, ill-disposed to advice, sufficient unto themselves; but the elder was irascible, bursting out like a thunder-storm and then yielding to sunshine, while the younger, who better controlled his feelings and kept himself under rigid discipline, did not disclose infirmity of temper so much as a cold, unsympathetic manner, which could make a scornful utterance terribly bitter, far more so, indeed, oftentimes, than he was aware of. Neither had tact in statesmanship; both despised little arts; but the father, who theorized against democracy, was in his day loved by the people and thwarted by the politicians, while the son, whose theories were liberal enough, could dispel a rivalry better than the dense weight of unpopularity which forever enveloped him. The elder erred the more often from impulse, the younger from a want of it; and yet reflection, or a returning sense of justice, prompted John Quincy Adams to many a considerate and disinterested act which from the world was hidden. In business method, punctiliousness, the supervision of department business, the first Adams failed; while in these respects the second may be held up as a model President; but hesitation to remove, to maintain a needful discipline, was their common failing in the Executive office. Neither had the faculty of organizing; but each

as a leader left political elements to coalesce as they might. To rule through subordinates and keep up a loyal, compact administration was beyond them; and still more, to keep the majority bearing up the whole weight; for each, with all his study of comparative politics, carried something of the doctrinaire into affairs, and though strong in great points was weak in the small ones. Both, in fine, had burning convictions, but the father's convictions were those of youth and practical benevolence; the son's, on the other hand, of serious study, a morose disposition, and crabbed old age; these guided to independence and union, those, by making the north courageous, to fratricide and civil war, and yet through all, as we may hope, to a higher conception of liberty and equal rights. As President the two Adamses passed quickly out among the failures of the age, their best deeds not long remembered; but as fearless men on the floor of an American Congress, stirring the blood, forcing conviction by example, and compelling willing or unwilling attention, they stand on the canvas the most vivid figures of two remarkable epochs of American history full sixty years apart. John Adams stood among the immortals in youth as John Quincy Adams did in old age.

So far as education and the experience of foreign courts and cabinet can make one a chief magistrate, no one was ever better qualified for President of the United States than John Quincy Adams. His training for that office began in precocious youth, and under the watchful direction of parents whose pride as well as their love was bound up in him. Nothing that the fame and influence of John Adams could accomplish—and in those days traditions and family influence were very powerful—was omitted, that a favorite son might

be set on the high road to public preferment. The son himself responded early and constantly to these efforts; he developed ambition, talent, studiousness, and an indomitable perseverance. His daily life was regulated with the utmost precision; not an hour of the day was wasted. He rose when his chronometer pointed a certain hour, and dressed by the light of his taper; in regimen and exercise he calculated to a nicety what would keep him in physical tone for the labors each day imposed and carry him the full span of a great public career; business, usually of the diplomatic kind, divided the time with books, literary composition, and whatever else might serve for self-culture; bedtime approached, and happy was he if no social hilarity kept him up beyond the regular hour. With so perfect a chart of daily existence formed in early life, and, like civil government itself, capable of amendment or remodelling as experience and the change of circumstances might suggest, but never to be abandoned, each obligation of life was punctiliously regarded; and among these obligations, the social one, which in court circles consists so largely in the interchange of cards, receptions, routs, balls, and the like ceremonious civilities, found its place. But where so much was laid out to be done and so little left to happen, the gentler hospitalities and graces of life were the most likely to suffer. Adams weeded the garden of his morals with the utmost care; his introspection was constant; he took physical exercise but little recreation; he allowed himself no vices, no indulgences. He never gave way to the dissipations of youth, for he had no youth. As part of his machinery of self-improvement he opened a Diary in 1794,—indeed, his earlier efforts in this direction began when he was only twelve years old,—and kept it almost continu-

ously until within a few years of his death. Out of all this self-discipline and public experience, beginning in early youth, which was confined chiefly to the artificial surroundings of European courts or of our pseudo-court at Washington, developed a character whose unyielding Puritanism, always the strongest element in spite of all that mingling with the world could do, gave it a sombre and unsocial cast. He grew up to be a lover of books and political philosophy more than a lover of his kind. Self-love, self-absorption, was his great defect of character; although he meant to be just by all men, and as a statesman the good of the public was, doubtless, the grand purpose of his career. By the time he became President he had grown close in money matters, close in family affection, and a constant niggard of his hours,—nothing annoyed him more than to be obliged to waste so much precious time in listening to foolish and frivolous people. Then, too, he was stiff and unsusceptible. He enjoyed the seclusion of his home and study, where he might prepare by himself the immortal task; and in that task he cared to consult only Him who prescribed it.

Adams had in his day met more great men than perhaps any other American of his age; yet among men great or small he had hardly an intimate friend; from boyhood he had mingled constantly in society, entertaining and being entertained, yet he could not make a guest feel at ease in his company. Light compliments he rarely exchanged. If he thought a jest, it left his mouth a sarcasm. He was earnest, but had no generous sense of humor. When a common voter came up with his plain but hearty salute, Adams turned him off with an ill-suited response, uttered in so harsh and jarring a tone that it sounded like a malediction. His

iciness of manner repelled even where he invited approaches. Circumspect, cautious, distrustful, his habit was to receive but not communicate. In short, his way to distinction was won not by courting popularity but by compelling respect; and at every step he took a foe would start up. He judged of contemporaries harshly, as his Diary shows; looked at the seamy side of human nature; and suffering great hindrance from his want of tact, he judged bitterly enough of those who thrived by means of it.

But, popular or unpopular, who could better have been leaned upon at this hour than one so eminent in the qualities of a statesman? For to great talents, information, and experience in affairs, Adams united unceasing industry and perseverance, besides facility of execution and a wholesome temperate life. He had a high standard of public and private virtue, and was conscientious in his dealings. Nevertheless, Adams had faults as an Executive fatal to a successful administration. We speak not of his infirmity of temper; for on the occasions which had most tried his patience he well sustained the dignity of his station, and drew up a message so mild upon French spoliations that Clay protested that one might as well have announced those claims as abandoned. Nothing but the outrageous assaults of Congress in the latter part of his term drove him from the good resolution to curb tongue and pen with which he guardedly set out. But Adams, though a statesman, was no politician; and no one can read the lesson of his failure and hold arts of management longer in contempt. He was in the most genuine sense the scholar in politics. So far from organizing the support which was far from sufficient when he entered upon his office, he let what he had fritter away through

inattention or an unwillingness to make the effort to attach it. As to a policy, instead of considering how much the times would bear, proposing simply what might be carried, and avoiding needless hostilities, he blocked out grand but impracticable projects, as though his mission lay in convincing posterity; and then, leaving all to Providence, and nothing to his personal influence with the legislature, he carried nothing of consequence, but raised a whirlwind of opposition. Nor did he keep office-holders under discipline while conducting the public business, and make the machinery of his administration work to one end, but left those who honored and those who were pulling down his administration, as well as the indifferent, all tugging in the same harness. If Clay asked the removal of some virulent office-holder who was working against the administration and weakening it, the President objected by some general maxim; his line was not drawn at faithful service, with neutrality in politics; and even when frauds at the Philadelphia custom-house brought scandal upon his government, he hesitated to make a precedent of displacing the officers there. Various other instances might be cited. There was a curious timidity noticeable here: that of a liberal disposition in politics, some would say; that of conscious guilt that his own place had been corruptly acquired, said others; but history should pronounce it a constitutional weakness. For firmness and sound discretion in exercising the removal power and maintaining the morals of the service may be found in a governor, a general, a corporate manager, or even a mayor, sooner than in the best-read scholar or diplomatist who has passed his prime without ever having been really responsible for subordinates. He admitted that an officer should be honest and com-

petent, and, on the whole, not disloyal to his chief; but he put upon himself such a burden of proof before he would remove or ask a resignation that discipline was really impracticable, nor did he seem unhappy that it should be so.

How incongruous a cabinet Adams meant at first to form this writer has shown, as also his prime error in selecting a Secretary of State. His ideal was a high one: he meant to administer, not to manage; to administer for the people, not for a party; to carry out his plans by a policy which the people themselves would spontaneously sustain. Of his ability to conquer by this ideal he felt at the outset confident, over-confident. He originated ideas, was set and stubborn in his own views, as well as fearless, and hence yielded to advice rather than changed his convictions. A sublimated strain ran through his official utterances, and the earlier ones most of all. But his standard was too rigid, too elevated, while at the same time he clung pertinaciously to his own maxims and methods. This his cabinet advisers soon saw. The course they took was a curious and yet a needful one. They obtained permission to scrutinize the draft of his annual message by themselves and minute the passages they objected to before discussing them with him, thus enabling themselves to concentrate criticism and impress their objections. It was a mark of his just disposition that he yielded to their wishes on this point, at the same time almost reproaching himself for doing so. Their nervousness was lessened when he announced that general recommendations should be confined to his first and last messages. The fear of alienating Virginia had not induced him to tone down his expressions in favor of national improvements and a university, as though the

existing constitution sanctioned them; and when asked to say something soothing to South Carolina, he bluntly refused, because South Carolina had placed an unconstitutional law upon her statute book relating to the blacks, and would not repeal it. In his anxiety to be upright Adams would make himself needlessly severe. But the effect of his watchful, even morbid self-discipline, was felt by those in his constant confidence, and his wish to do right kept their intercourse smooth. "I had fears of Mr. Adams's temper and disposition," wrote Clay in 1828, "but I must say that they have not been realized; and I have found in him, since I have been associated with him in the Executive government, as little to censure or condemn as I could have expected in any man."

No President ever refused so ungraciously to stretch a point, however slight, for the sake of doing a personal favor to anybody; at the same time, no President, considering his surrounding circumstances, ever stood so much in need of doing little acts to make himself popular. He would not attend the Maryland cattle show when invited, and set a precedent for being claimed as part of such exhibitions; nor in declining could he conceal his honest reasons; for to such a mind official conduct resolved itself into a series of propositions, and everything was to be decided upon mental argument. The decision was usually in favor of non-action. When asked to exert his influence in the choice of a Senator from one of the States he was angry, as he might well have been. He would not give money to aid a political canvass, nor put his name upon a subscription paper. When the head of a military school marched his pupils to the White House he would not make them a speech, because he suspected the visit was

a piece of quackery to get the seminary puffed into notice in the public prints. He refused to answer a campaign slander, even when constituents asked his explanation; but we should observe that the easy expedient of interviewing had not thus early been adopted by the press. Neither his taste nor principles permitted him to electioneer by showing himself to the people; but here he yielded something to pressure, for he passed through Philadelphia and Baltimore, the canvass being a very critical one for his party, and really enjoyed the crowds and handshaking. He would not meet the foes of the administration on their own ground, nor try to bring presses to his support. "I have observed," he says, "the tendency of our electioneering to venality, and shall not encourage it." All this honest obstinacy and rigid adherence to rule might have made some Presidents vastly popular; nor is it likely that with more suavity of manner and a more accommodating temper Adams could have turned the tide which set so strongly against him. He had at the start voluntarily taken odds too great for any President who owed something to himself and his party; and this, after all, was the prime source of his unpopularity.

At the opening of the Chesapeake and Ohio canal, our President discovered with pleasure how a characteristic act which strikes the fancy suddenly may touch the deepest chord of the occasion. He took the spade to break the ground; but his strokes made no impression, because the large stump of a tree was beneath the surface. He then threw off his coat, applied the spade once more, and brought up a shovelful of earth. The loud shout which burst forth from the spectators showed that they were roused by this incident more than by all the rhetoric of the day. For once an electric

sympathy between himself and his audience was established, and he enjoyed the sensation; but it was a life-long maxim with him not to be sensitive to transient popular symptoms, but to let them bubble and work off, and look rather to ultimate than the immediate effects of public opinion.

CHAPTER XIII.

FIRST ADMINISTRATION OF ANDREW JACKSON.

§ I. Period of Twenty-first Congress. March 4, 1829-March 3, 1831.—§ II. The United States in 1831.—§ III. Period of Twenty-second Congress. March 4, 1831-March 3, 1833.

THERE seemed to the staid and dignified social leaders of the capital something like a sudden irruption of barbarians upon the little Rome on the day Andrew Jackson was sworn in as President. "Hurrah for Jackson!" had been the cry on the streets ever since his arrival, and, as Webster expresses it, the city was "full of speculation and speculators." Such crowds of visitors had called upon him daily at the tavern where he lodged, that his committee of arrangements were very anxious to have the White House ready in season for the 4th of March reception, for the guests would have broken down the stairways and made havoc of the rooms at such pent-up quarters as Gadsby's. The day of inauguration was warm and spring-like. A great crowd, numbering not less than 10,000, blocked up the vicinity of the eastern portico of the Capitol, where the ceremonies were to take place; repressed and kept at a proper distance by a ship's cable, which stretched across about two-thirds of the way up the long flight of steps in front. This was the first time that noble entrance, with its columns, one for each State of the Union, stood ready for use in such ceremonies. Jack- 1829. March 4.

son's tall form, as it emerged at high noon from among those columns, was the signal for shouts from the spectators which rent the air. Vice-President Calhoun had at 11 o'clock called the Senate to order and renewed his official oath. Jackson entered the Senate Chamber shortly before twelve, and at the appointed time the procession of dignitaries went out to the portico.

The inaugural address was brief, fervid in expression, but non-committal except in a promise or rather threat of reform. "The recent demonstration of public sentiment inscribes on the list of executive duties, in characters too legible to be overlooked, the task of *reform;* which will require particularly the correction of those abuses that have brought the patronage of the federal government into conflict with the freedom of elections, and the counteraction of those causes which have disturbed the rightful course of appointment, and have placed or continued power in unfaithful or incompetent hands." At the close of this address the oath of office was administered by the venerable Chief Justice.

Out of respect to his wife's memory, Jackson had signified a wish to avoid all parade on this occasion. He rode on horseback from the Capitol to the White House after the ceremony was over, a great crowd following him, already encouraged by their success in forcing the barricades at the east front to shake hands with the man of the people. A lively writer of the day portrays the scene which followed at the palace. "The President was literally pursued by a motley concourse of people, riding, running helter-skelter, striving who should first gain admittance into the Executive mansion, where it was understood that refreshments were to be distributed." The halls of the White House

were filled with a disorderly rabble, common people forcing their way into the saloons and mingling with the foreigners and distinguished citizens who surrounded the President. China and glass were broken in their struggle to get at the ices and cakes, though punch and other drinkables had been carried out in tubs and buckets to them; but had it been in hogsheads it would have been insufficient, besides unsatisfactory, to the mob who claimed equality in all things. "The confusion became more and more appalling. At one moment the President, who had retreated until he was pressed against the wall of the apartment, could only be secured against serious danger by a number of gentlemen linking arms and forming themselves into a barrier. It was then that the windows were thrown open, and the living torrent found an outlet. It was the People's day, the People's President, and the people would rule."

Inauguration day passed, but the mob of strange faces was still to be seen hovering about. Strangers filled the anteroom and lobbies and all public places, though making less free henceforth with the White House apartments, and resolving themselves more into knots of politicians, most of whom compared notes freely and with jovial good nature, like men who know not how soon a fellow-struggler may get what he wants and be in a position to lend a helping hand. This was not the people all-ruling, but the people after office. A great and hungry multitude swarmed in the city, ravening up and down from morning to night; "too many to be fed without a miracle." The newspaper corps comprised a great part of this force, and it seemed as if

every Jackson editor in the land had come to quarter upon the government, as though unable to make a decent living out of his press.

The only line of policy clearly foreshadowed when Jackson took the oath of office was "to reward his friends and punish his enemies;" and this he relentlessly pursued, whether the victim was treated with anger or courtesy. At the same time parasites gathered about him, who fed his jealousy and his desire for revenge. It was impossible that he should judge of the facts calmly and act upon a careful examination. He kindled at every spark. His mind was incapable of that mature and impartial investigation which alone enables one to reach just conclusions, and impulse controlled his decision. But Jackson's intuitions were keen: a glance of his searching eye told him more of a man than volumes of testimony; and yet intuitions will lead astray. His want of political information was compensated by native sagacity; and the great secret of his success consisted in keeping the common people, the majority, constantly by his side.

Though not to be resisted by mortal successfully, Jackson had little blind avenues of approach, by which one artful, and at the same not unfaithful to his interests, might turn him with surprising ease. Vanity was a weakness with him; and the tale is at least plausible that one who could not get an office he wanted by the customary method won it and the general's heart besides by asking the gift of his old tobacco-pipe. Jackson had a brusque humor and enjoyed lively company. He liked young men about him who talked to the point, knew how to give and take, would stand up without flinching to defend him, and trod on his foibles very gently. Such men learned to love the old hero, and

found promotion easy; for where Jackson's heart was enlisted he was very tender, and it was his maxim never to forget friend or enemy. He carried the master in his manner, but could make men feel it a pleasure to serve him. In the midst of his bitterest proscription of the Adams office-holders, or, as he called it, "putting down misrule," during the summer of 1829, his private letters to friends in Tennessee show that he was a sick, unhappy old man, weary with the buzz of beggars and sycophants about him, and longing to retire and be at rest.

Angrily as the friends of internal improvement protested against the President's repeated control of majorities by his veto, the policy he pursued was on the whole a popular one, and well calculated to allay discontent at the south. But South Carolina nullification was now coming in sight, and a celebrated debate which belongs to the first session exposed its claims and its fallacies to the country. When South Carolina put forward her "exposition and protest," she looked for rescue to Andrew Jackson. His accession to office checked for a time all excitement upon the tariff question, and he came in under circumstances which might well impose the prudence he practised; for the South had voted for him as the friend of southern interests, while New York, Pennsylvania, and the West looked upon him as a friend of the tariff. But Calhoun and the South Carolina leaders had not for a moment laid aside their scheme of resistance to the obnoxious act of 1828,—the "tariff of abominations," as it was called, —and they prepared to bring nullification forward at an early opportunity in a more imposing manner than

had ever before been attempted. They meant to test thus the strength of their cause before Congress and the new administration; and so infatuated was Calhoun for the moment that he imagined it in his power to draw Jackson himself into the meshes of his finely-woven theory of State sovereignty, and induce the national lion to stretch out his paws submissively to be clipped. The arena selected for a first impression was the Senate, where the great chief himself presided and guided the onset with his eye. Hayne, South Carolina's foremost Senator, was the chosen champion; and the cause of his State, both in its right and wrong side, could have found no abler exponent while Calhoun's official station kept him from the floor. It has been said that Hayne was Calhoun's sword and buckler, and that he returned to the contest refreshed each morning by nightly communions with the Vice-President, drawing auxiliary supplies from the well-stored arsenal of his powerful and subtle mind. Be this as it may, Hayne was a ready and copious orator, a highly-educated lawyer, a man of varied accomplishments, shining as writer, speaker, and counsellor, equally qualified to draw up a bill or to advocate it, quick to discern, and, though brilliant, disposed to view things on the practical side. His person was flexible, about the medium height and well proportioned; his face pleasant and expressive, and, though serious, lighting up readily with a smile; his manners irresistibly cordial and easy, winning strangers at first sight. He turned readily from business to society, and pursued with equal zest the triumphs of the forum and ball-room. A graceful adaptiveness at all points to a life of distinction was his striking quality; rugged inequalities in his nature there were none. Gifted for a life of public eminence,

nobly born, bearing a Revolutionary name pathetic in its memories, well fortified by wealth and marriage connections, dignified, never vulgar nor unmindful of the feelings of those with whom he mingled, Hayne moved in an atmosphere where lofty and chivalrous honor was the ruling sentiment. But it was the honor of a caste; and the struggling bread-winners of society, the great commonalty, he little studied or understood. This was the man to fire an aristocracy of fellow-citizens ready to arm when their interests were in danger, and upon him it devolved to advance the cause of South Carolina, break down the tariff, and fascinate the Union with the new rattlesnake theories.

The great debate, which culminated in Hayne's encounter with Webster, came about in a somewhat casual way. Senator Foote of Connecticut submitted a proposition inquiring into the expediency of limiting the sales of public lands to those already in the market. This seemed like an eastern spasm of jealousy at the progress of the west. Benton was rising in renown as the advocate not only of western settlers, but of a new theory that the public lands should be given away instead of sold to them. He joined Hayne in using this opportunity to try to detach the West from the East, and restore the old co-operation of the West and the South against New England. The discussion took a wide range, going back to topics that had agitated the country before the constitution was formed. It was of a partisan and censorious character, and drew nearly all the chief Senators out. But the topic which became the leading feature of the whole debate and gave it an undying interest was that of nullification, in which Hayne and Webster came forth as the chief antagonists. Webster had seen the angry drift of the discussion, and

felt that it rested upon himself to uphold the cause of the Union, and his own State besides, from the menaces and reproaches which the southerner hurled so recklessly. He believed that men were already plotting to break up the Union, and that the people must be aroused to vigilance. In politics, at the same time, his position was independent. His alliance with Adams had not been so close that the sense of defeat should make him either crestfallen or rancorous. Towards new parties his course was uncommitted; he tended to Clay, but he was no man's man, though a true son of New England, and to the fibre of his soul an American. Hayne launched his confident javelin at the New England States. He accused them of a desire to check the growth of the west in the interests of protection. Webster replied to his speech the next day, and left not a shred of the charge, baseless as it was. Inflamed and mortified at this repulse, Hayne soon returned to the assault, primed with a two-days' speech, which at great length vaunted the patriotism of South Carolina and bitterly attacked New England, dwelling particularly upon her conduct during the late war. It was a speech delivered before a crowded auditory, and loud were the southern exultations that he was more than a match for Webster. Strange was it, however, that in heaping reproaches upon the Hartford Convention he did not mark how nearly its leaders had mapped out the same line of opposition to the national government that his State now proposed to take, both relying upon the arguments of the Virginia and Kentucky resolutions of 1798-99.

1830. Jan. 19–25.

Webster rose the next day in his seat to make his reply. He had allowed himself but a single night

from eve to morn to prepare for a critical and crowning occasion. But his reply was gathered from the choicest arguments and the richest thoughts
Jan. 26. that had long floated through his brain while this crisis was gathering; and bringing these materials together in lucid and compact shape, he calmly composed and delivered before another crowded and breathless auditory a speech full of burning passages, which will live as long as the American Union, and the grandest effort of his life. Two leading ideas predominated in this reply, and with respect to either Hayne was not only answered but put to silence. First, New England was vindicated. As a pious son of Federalism, Webster went the full length of the required defence. Some of his historical deductions may be questioned; but far above all possible error on the part of her leaders stood colonial and Revolutionary New England, and the sturdy, intelligent, and thriving people whose loyalty to the Union had never failed, and whose home, should ill befall the nation, would yet prove liberty's last shelter. Next, the Union was held up to view in all its strength, symmetry, and integrity, reposing in the ark of the Constitution, no longer an experiment, as in the days when Hamilton and Jefferson contended for shaping its course, but ordained and established by and for the people, to secure the blessings of liberty to all posterity. It was not a Union to be torn up without bloodshed; for nerves and arteries were interwoven with its roots and tendrils, sustaining the lives and interests of twelve millions of inhabitants. No hanging over the abyss of disunion, no weighing of the chances, no doubting as to what the constitution was worth, no placing of liberty before Union, but "liberty and union, now and forever, one and insep-

arable." This was the tenor of Webster's speech, and nobly did the country respond to it. There was no apprehension of an irrepressible conflict between slavery and freedom; but the liberty was that liberty which permitted of holding men in bondage, and the Union that product of the constitution which held in alliance the ambitions of States with their several slave and free systems of society. Thirty years later, when South Carolina forced the experiment now broached in debate, Webster's immortal sentiment, though he was then in the grave, first brought the loyal part of the people to their feet, and the South soon learned that peaceable secession was the wildest of delusions; then the graver lesson was added that by once withdrawing his peculiar institutions from the protection of the constitution, their shield hitherto against the condemnation of mankind, the slaveholder had exposed them to certain ruin.

The new heresy of nullification was in this debate stated on the one side and refuted on the other. What Hayne and the incessant thinker from whom he drew his inspiration preferred for popularity's sake to call the States' right doctrine as declared, was that "in case of a plain, palpable violation of the constitution, a State may interpose" and arrest or nullify the law within her own borders for her own protection; a statement of itself too cautious to justify its practical application to any such case as that of the tariff, where, if any infraction could be claimed at all, it consisted merely in raising duties, properly laid, to an excessive rate. Against such a doctrine Webster showed that this government was the independent offspring of the popular will, not the creature of State legislatures, nor obliged to act through State agency; in other words, a national government, possessing within itself all the powers necessary to en-

force its own laws and for its own preservation; and that no State nor combination of States has the power to arrest or prevent the execution of a law of the United States.

We are now at the portal of an epoch full of eager progress and the crowding, trampling ranks of humanity. It is an epoch in which science and sentiment, glory and degradation, the desire of material substance and devotion to principle, are found strangely blended; until above the din of industry is heard the roar of the cannon, and the smoke curls upward from many a battle-field, where the stubborn Americans, invincible when united, have turned their arms and energy upon one another. Let us take of the age we are leaving, already becoming a primitive one by comparison, a brief retrospect, like one who ascends a mountain road and looks back for the last time upon the green meadows and wavy slopes gently nestling in the perspective, before the high mountain crests and the ravines furrowed with deep lines appear, the picture of fierce but careworn nature.

1831.

America and her institutions were no longer to be expounded by superficial travellers alone, but by political philosophers like De Tocqueville, Grund, and Harriet Martineau, who came to appreciate and not disparage. The very name "American," now bestowed upon the people of the United States by universal consent, identified them with a continent; for in the New World, at least, our rank was first, and our example fast pervad-

ing. The whole tendency of the last fifteen years had been to establish the American Union more firmly as a nation. For, composite and complex as this government doubtless was, so that each State might regulate and administer independently the mass of those concerns which affect the individual in his home and business relations, an elevated love of country found its only grand expression in the growth and prosperity of the whole Union. This central government, limited and specific as might be its objects, had yet the greater energy and directness; the starry flag, the army and navy, ocean commerce, diplomatic intercourse, the power to make war or peace, to acquire and regulate new territory and increase from time to time the membership of States, all were national. Born of the immortal strife, this Union had been firmly established by a second war for independence. The names of Washington, Franklin, Adams, Jefferson, Hamilton, shone in the same glorious constellation. The magnificent domain of this nation, enlarged by peaceful purchase, the procreation of new States while old ones remained in territory contracted, the constant move and interchange of population, the increasing facilities of travel, traffic, and diffusion of ideas, all tended to draw American States closer in laws and manners, and to foster both the national sentiment and a sense of interdependence, which presented the Union as indispensable to the well-being of the whole country. Under such conditions State pride could hardly flourish beyond the borders of the old thirteen, nor there, unless citizens of colonial descent were haughty to new-comers and new ideas.

It was an error not rarely committed by strangers to judge of the whole United States by one part. Massa-

chusetts and Louisiana, Pennsylvania and South Carolina, were really as unlike in habits and character as England and Scotland, or so many different kingdoms of Germany. Hence Europeans were often misled by gossiping writers upon American life, like Mrs. Trollope, who saw but one phase of it, and stretched the truth to broaden a caricature. Every State, every section, bore marks of its peculiar origin, and there were palpable differences in manners, traits, and social institutions, which to fairly explain and reconcile required one to trace carefully the threads of local chronology, if not to make a careful tour of the whole Union. Those differences we have already sketched; and it only remains to add that in a people like ours, essentially modern, the influences which moulded each separate State were easily studied. For though Europe furnished the starting-point, yet the European countries whence we were derived had each its national character fully formed when American colonization began. British emigration alone, that most powerful element of all, the foundation of British colonies on the various points of the Atlantic coast, was accompanied by conditions so strikingly different as to give to the Anglo-Americans and their offspring a strong family likeness, and at the same time an unlikeness. Especially, at the present stage of our development as a people, was it needful to distinguish between Americans of slave and free States, and those again of communities old and new. Only in a free State might one labor for himself and win position by it; only in a new one did he escape conventional society and the usual exaction of deference to the local aristocracy. Lines of demarcation like these were graven deeply into the Anglo-American nature.

Nothing was more firmly implanted by this time in

the American nature than a fundamental faith in the sovereignty of the people, and a conviction that the will of the majority should rule. The principle was applied in private co-operation, secular or religious, as well as the affairs of state; and even they who happened to be in a present minority assented to the rule, knowing well its value to themselves should they hereafter preponderate in numbers, as they hoped, and turn the scales. This majority doctrine was the vital function of our American system; for it imposed self-discipline, pointed to persuasion as the true means of acquiring personal influence, and kept the general society constantly armed against the arrogance of its individual members. Americans no longer owned a preference for monarchies; they agreed in the support of popular government, and the only essential point in dispute related to the extension of the suffrage and political rights to men formerly disqualified. Under such a system imagination would find less scope than the sense of civic responsibility; errors were committed, and abuses suffered through ignorance or a lax supervision of the people's servants, but correction followed discovery, with a temperate exercise of justice. In the ruling race of this Union the love of freedom and improvement was admirably blended with respect for the laws and the disposition to deal moderately in affairs; and hence the vast superiority of this republican experiment as contrasted with that of the turbulent races of Spanish America. Politics interested all, and its passions might sometimes provoke scenes of violence; but violence recoiled upon those who attempted it, and every open attempt of a minority to wrest a victory by force was frowned down. The danger under our peaceful system consisted rather in the fraudulent effort of

partisans to figure a majority by bribery, secret intimidation, a corrupt ballot, and the falsifying of returns; and what made that danger the greater when men undertook to live by politics, was the necessity all politicians were under, as a class, of paying court to the people in order to rise. Flatterers and time-servers might thus drive high-minded and sincere statesmen from their seats. These were evils to be watched and checked, if not wholly prevented; and evils will abound sufficiently under every form of government. Birth and wealth excited envy; but every citizen of superior talent, having a genuine good to accomplish, was likely to find his true field of public usefulness, if he persevered. Hitherto, at least, in American history, the chief honors of the republic had fallen to the virtuous and intelligent, and patriotism felt the inspiration of great examples.

If the pride of the American in his nation had at this period something of morbid solicitude that his visitors should feel as he did, we must not fail to respect the seriousness of purpose with which he was working out a noble experiment against the prejudices of civilized Europe. He wished his cause to be fairly stated abroad, and was angry when it was not. His earnestness made him espouse in feeling the cause of liberty throughout the world. Wherever humanity fought for its rights, wherever the yoke of tyranny was shaken off and men contended to be free, there might be found the American heart. The first breezes of the French revolution sent the blood leaping in our veins. We were the first of nations to extend to Bolivar and the Spanish Americans sympathy and welcome; the Greeks and their cause had our early God-speed; Kossuth, Garibaldi, in turn, won later our enthusiasm. Indeed pop-

ular feeling in the American Union was often so feverish when thus stimulated, that those responsible for affairs kept with difficulty that path of neutrality which sound policy and tradition enjoined; often the popular excitement spent itself in meetings and contributions, and then it was discovered that impulse had carried us beyond the bounds of rational judgment. Cold calculation and interest could not sway the American feeling, but the prudent after-thought saved us from folly. It seemed often as if the American knew no empire less than the universal heart of mankind; for in whatever community public opinion and the will of the majority could hold a realm in steady obedience, there was the American fatherland.

To unlock American manners at this age one must recall the varied circumstances of local settlement and the heterogeneous elements of which American society was compounded in consequence. Old Dutch customs, which Irving so well describes, had left their trace in Manhattan Island and along the shores of the Hudson; wherever they might congregate, our foreign immigrants, the Irish and Germans in particular, kept up some social observances of the old country; but whatever was most striking and permanent in American manners was chiefly derived from England, the hive of these Atlantic colonies. If we were less provincial than formerly, it was because of habits engendered in our independent and strange surroundings. In most respects the federal government was subordinate to the State in moulding the institutions of local society; but through all, save in the remote frontiers first colonized by the Spanish and French, worked the influence of the

English common law, which is a law of custom or of ancient decrees crumbling into custom. Between Northern and Southern society ran the boldest line of demarcation; the West reproducing the habits of that section which dominated in its birth, but with a racier flavor.

The leading feature of American society as a whole was its commonplaceness, the unpicturesque level it afforded. And to dwell chiefly upon the average social life in our free States, where the busy hum was loudest, few, very few Americans could afford to indulge in idle leisure. In older centres of fashion, like New York, Philadelphia, and Boston, and in most small towns of colonial pedigree, might be found some ruling social set which nursed its little century of traditions, and skipped the grandfather to quarter their arms among the shadows of remote ancestors in other lands. The ambition of exclusiveness is Anglo-Saxon, if not universal; but the laws and the circumstances of American life deny it a handsome scope. Here one ladder serves for rising, another for descending; laws of inheritance break up a fortune into fragments; the favor of the people is essential to public preferment. As for a leisure class like that in England which the author of "Pelham" described,—men devoted to club life and frivolous pleasure, born to fortunes which they were restrained from consuming, yawning out of bed at noon, and spending the night at balls or gaming-houses, after an hour's lounge in Parliament, to which the pocket borough furnished a seat,—no such class yet existed in America. What inducement had the foreigner of wealth or refined habits to migrate hither? It was for the poor, the industrious, those without large means or influence at home, that this country presented its at-

traction. Its charm lay in the wide diffusion of public and social opportunities, and the real phenomenon of this American life was that here, beyond every other age or country in the world's history, the mass of common people were intelligent and free. All our fashionable and aristocratic distinctions were but as lace drapery floating out of an open window.

Of American methods in business, we have already spoken. And again must the reader listen to those sounds of ceaseless activity which in the United States filled each observing stranger with astonishment because it was so earnest and so universal. No one in these free States felt as if he could afford to be idle. Even the best endowed and the best educated, with rare exceptions, pursued some occupation, and our learned professions were full of distinguished men who earned for their families the moderate income. Of all who possessed a fortune scarce one-quarter part had inherited it; the rest gained wealth by their own industry, and after acquiring habits of toil and economy which were seldom abandoned in later life. It cost as much care to keep a fortune as to make it, such were the risks in this ever-moving mass of society. Scarcely feeling that he had laid up enough to retire upon, the American pursued his busy schemes to the last moment; yet for counteracting the miserly tendency in the individual there was always a surrounding atmosphere of social influences to brace him up and make him feel that as a public servant or public benefactor he owed the duty of a good citizen. This regard for public opinion made wealth in America a great lever; rich men did penance for a stingy youth, not in their wills alone, but by liberal gifts to churches, colleges, and hospitals while they lived; and the community, by advertising their good

deeds, indirectly added to their store. In a society like ours there was a certain policy in doing good with wealth which fortified the nobler impulses; for religion and charity both depended upon voluntary support; taxation, too, and the whole system of popular government rested upon the wealthier. Wealth emphatically was power; and the newly rich even in the older cities trod close upon the heels of an aristocracy which boasted blood but no money, while in new and robust centres of life their social lead was irresistible. Scholars and professional men already felt the need of their patronage, and, though popular honor might consist with honest poverty, private comfort and advantage sought to expand by riches and found a family name. Three rich Americans of this period, all public-spirited and identified with three great cities, were of humble extraction: Girard of Philadelphia, Astor of New York, Lawrence of Boston,—the banker, the real-estate investor, the founder of the cotton-mills.

Fourier writes of "industrial feudalism" as the master-spirit of the nineteenth century. These barons of industry, of the bank, the mill, or the carrier company, still less of the stock market, had scarcely yet founded their strong castles, though the force of organized capital swept below the surface of business like some hidden current. Monopolies as yet there were none, except perhaps in banking. Occupations were diversified. That minute perfection in a single industry which competition had produced abroad was scarcely known here, but for all other work the American was well adapted. With canals to be dug, towns to be founded and built up, forests cleared away, factories started, mines disemboweled, there was abundance of work from the highest to the humblest, and the Irish

bog-trotter who could handle a spade or pickaxe might feel sure of an honest living. One industry fostered another. Consequently, our manners and customs were those of a society hard at work and intent almost to enthusiasm on subduing the material world. Here was to be seen a vast country, much of it still in nature's primeval wilderness, and a vigorous race hacking and hewing in all directions, preparing forest lands for farming, and farm-lands next for a close urban population. Every true citizen carried some speculation in his brain,—a back street which would open up house-lots in his potato-field, a railroad or canal which would bring his town half a day nearer than the next to market, some snug venture with his friends in a coal-mine, a cotton-mill, or a western township. His project was feasible usually if only the country would grow up to it fast enough. So in our patents utility was sought; of perpetual-motion machines little was left, but ingenuity was hard at work upon labor-saving implements for threshing, washing, churning, shelling corn, cutting straw, and the like. Whatever the American took in hand he tried to make productive, to bring out two blades of grass where one had grown before. Nor did he hoard and save like the Dutch, but he invested. Usury laws still prevailed, but our new States allured capital by the allowance of liberal rates of interest, and wherever the law was harsh devices were common for evading it.

"Such unity of purpose and sympathy of feeling," writes the pert Mrs. Trollope, "nowhere else exist, except, perhaps, in an ant's nest."

But the phenomenon of American development was

the growth of the great West. Solitude and privation founded this most typical civilization. Two or three hundred farmers, who dwelt far apart in little log cabins, with scarce a human companion outside the family nest, sowed the seed of happy towns and villages, many of which had sprung up and blossomed before the founder's eyes. These barons of the quarter-section, settling upon acres which cost often the last dollars one could scrape together, would put up each his miserable hut, and proceed to cut and clear and plant Indian-corn, with no ready capital but a few blankets, a skillet, rifle, and axe, and the two-horse wagon which brought him many a day's journey with his family. A strong arm and a stout heart, a loving helpmate, and God over all, these were his dependence and his thought, as he waded through the long grass wet with evening dews, his gun on his shoulder, bringing home the game which served for food. Hundreds sank under the exposure, for fever and ague exhaled from those undrained swamps, and no doctor was near to relieve the wife in childbirth or set the broken leg; but they who bore such privations grew tough and wiry in the out-of-door life. What wonder, then, that the Western patriarch who had once carried his grain twelve miles to be ground grew to be proud and even boastful when population pressed about him, and he had wealth, influence, and the comforts of life for his last years? This pride and boastfulness still permeated Cincinnati, that first settlement in this modern world which in twenty-five years had grown from an acorn of the forest wild into a thriving city of more than 30,000 inhabitants; for though first settled in 1789, it was not laid out with building-lots until 1808. This "wonder of the West," this "prophet's gourd of magic growth,"

this "infant Hercules," whose slope ascended from the crowded river-front beyond the city to a beautiful amphitheatre of encircling hills, had already the appearance of a large, industrious, and well-arranged city, in spite of the down-hill drainage, the hog-infested alleys, the streams running red with slaughter-house blood, as Mrs. Trollope described the realm of this hoyden queen. Geographical position and business relations with North and South made Cincinnati naturally conservative in political sentiments; but the controlling spirit was Northern, and the anchorage in a free State. Here the propensity was for new faces, new recruits in the hive to tread the honeycomb; and in the ceaseless welcome to the stranger less space was afforded for knitting the ties which bound tried comrades together.

This Western boastfulness and push, and ready hospitality, which gave to our expanding Union a new type of character, was not much longer to effervesce chiefly in Cincinnati. Another star, and a brighter, beamed on the horizon at the far-distant lake and prairie of Northeastern Illinois. But Chicago realized as yet only the forecast of a great destiny. A wooden village, crowded to excess, and clustering close to the guns of Fort Dearborn, whose stars and stripes were emblems of the Great Father with whom the Pottawatomies had come to treat for their removal beyond the Mississippi; the town where these Indians danced the war-dance and ran howling through the streets, humored where once they terrified; such was Chicago as late as 1833. But there was already a great speculation on foot, and its white inhabitants were convinced that here was the germ of an immense city. Fairs were held, horses traded off, new steamboat-lines projected,—in fine,

Chicago was already a vast sutler shop for dispensing among those large settled tracts and townships to the south and west tea, coffee, sugar, and other supplies brought through the great lakes from Detroit. St. Louis, far beyond the Mississippi, completed the present group of Western cities; anciently settled, French in origin, pro-slavery by adoption, having a speckled population and elements adverse to a generous development. But a new St. Louis had already sprung up near the old one, and fine limestone warehouses fronted the river. In this emporium of trans-Mississippi settlements and world's end the Northern spirit predominated, and for ten years its denizen had been ready to put his thumb on the map and brag that, as St. Louis stood at the centre of the American Union, it would some day be the capital of the nation. Illinois was in 1831 the swarming State for free settlers, though a thin line of pioneers had advanced up the Yellowstone and Missouri rivers, two thousand miles west of our Union frontiers as bounded when Jefferson was chosen President, and already the Rocky Mountains seemed scarcely more remote from civilization than the Alleghanies had been a century before.

Calhoun's downfall from Presidential favor was pregnant with woe to the Union. Through the adroit expedient which displaced his friends, he saw the clenched hand which was silently raised to destroy him.

1829–33. These four years of alternate hope and despair were the delirium of his life; and the fever of ambition now coursing wildly in his veins left him, when the Presidential prize was borne beyond his reach, and his disappointment complete, a lonely and

mischievous man, bloodless as a spider. Here lies the key which unlocks Calhoun's later career, and reconciles the whole inconsistent record of his public life; once a national man of nationals, but henceforth all for his State, for the Southern cause, reckless of the Union and the national welfare.

Singular was it that a statesman of Calhoun's capacity could have supposed for a moment that States-right theories more unpopular than those of the Hartford Convention could be planked into a Presidential platform; but he was a man of theories, who held young men by his glittering eye, and in the present chase, at least, he was easily infatuated. Ignorant as a child of northern sentiment and stability, and of spirit too lofty to win support by the little arts which were now coming into fashion, he seems nevertheless to have dreamed that he could in 1832 consolidate the South against the centralizing influences of the last eight years, bring over Pennsylvania and the West, and thus win the election. Under him a last rally would be made for pure government against a vulgar despotism. But northern men of cooler judgment who were lately his intimates foresaw his failure, and felt that his star had sunk forever.

The tariff subject, into which local and sectional interests are pieced like the coat of many colors, seemed destined now to recur with each Presidential contest, always to agitate but never to be settled. In spite of all that has been confidently said or written on this subject during a century of the American Union, it cannot be said that our people have advanced a single step beyond the experimental stage

1832.

of national tariffs; and this, most of all, for the reason that opinion is swayed by business interest, while business interests interlace over the vast surface of our continent, not only changing, but coming into admitted rivalry. Men may not fathom the laws of trade, but they trade upon principles of which they are tenacious; and to those principles, and the individual gain which they perceive in consequence, whether by making or saving money, they are likely to adhere. Actual experiment, it is true, may change a conviction on such points, but theory never. Here, among a varied and vigorous race of toilers crowding upon one another, eager to amass, and living under a complex but elastic system of laws which they themselves may influence, it is certain that the most intricate problems of political economy will in time be worked out; not, however, upon the lines of European experience, nor without much waste and wandering. Agriculture, manufactures, and commerce are all of national concern, and each must be considered; none should be greedy to the detriment of the rest.

Upon this delicate question the Jackson administration hardly showed its hand. The tariff act of 1828, against which the Southern planters had inveighed so bitterly, was still unchanged. Neither manufacturing nor agricultural States regarded it as a finality; and the increasing prosperity of American commerce, which bore with it an increased revenue, produced a state of things, now that the public debt was approaching extinction, where tariff modification of some sort would be not only judicious but indispensable.

As between these long-clashing principles, that of free trade may be pronounced the ideal one. It accords with nature; it respects the rights of man as a free

dweller upon God's earth; it fulfils that primary condition of trade that commodity shall be exchanged at choice for commodity, without hindrance or a subsidy to any man. But the world's trade is regulated, not by theory, but by existing facts; and there is no such thing as free trade with other nations unless other nations concede it. For the United States protection or favor to American industries meant at this time a final release from the bondage of the British colonial policy.

National bank, internal improvements, reform in the civil service, a just and orderly administration—such was the platform of principles over which Clay's followers unfurled for the last time the banner of "National Republicans." All the fragments of that once formidable party had by 1831 rallied under him as the only man who could possibly lead it again to victory. While these opposition elements had little cohesion, Jackson ruled his own followers with a rod of iron. Many still called this party by the old familiar name of "the Jackson" or "the Jackson Republican" party, but the word "Democratic," once affixed for reproach, and deprecated, this section of the old Jefferson Republican fold into which Monroe had absorbed all parties, fearlessly accepted in 1832. Jackson, then, and not Jefferson, was the first avowed leader of the American Democracy; and the national party that now gathered to conquer under Jackson by the noble name of Democrat, though ruled by southern ideas, has never been dissolved nor failed of a standard-bearer. Of this, his own party, Jackson was now by common consent the candidate for re-election as Pres- 1832.

ident; and following the second-term movement, begun in his favor by Pennsylvania and New York in 1830, Illinois, Alabama, and most other States in turn nominated him, either by the legislature or in popular convention. The only need at all for a national gathering of his party at this time was to nominate a Vice-President as the associate of his ticket.

Long, then, before the adjournment of Congress, and while the fate of the Bank recharter and tariff remained in suspense, the two national parties had selected their nominees. The flag of the Jackson party or "Democrats" bore the names of Jackson and Van Buren; that of the "National Republicans" emblazoned Clay and Sergeant. The Democracy or Jackson Republicans (for many of this party still adhered to the name of "Republican," which Jefferson had made historical) gloried in the foreign and domestic policy of their chief, the near extinction of the debt, the correction of centralizing tendencies, and above all, in Jackson's personal popularity. The "National Republicans," comprising chiefly the Adams men of 1828, promised to turn back the rising flood of misrule, and administer affairs in a broad and generous spirit worthy a nation of such exalted destiny. But a third party now stood across the opposition path, to the dismay of Clay's lax following; one, in fact, of those rare but recurring phenomena in our politics, which, like a comet spacing the sky, betokens some mighty convulsion, and then disappears to falsify and be forgotten. This was the Anti-Mason party, which by 1832 had gathered boldness enough to throw its whole force into the national encounter, there to perish ignobly. Its cradle was in western New York, and its first object of existence

that of bringing the supposed assassins of William Morgan to justice.

When Jackson's force-bill message was read in the Senate, Calhoun, now a Senator, earnestly repelled the imputation that South Carolina intended anything more by enrolling State troops than to defend her rights by legal process, unless the general government should employ troops against her. And by the time Wilkins, from the judiciary committee, reported a bill which clothed the Executive with the additional powers asked for, the new Senator diverted immediate action from the subject by bringing forward a set of resolutions on the federal constitution. Hereupon he began dogmatizing upon the abstract right of nullification and secession, as though to put the whole revolution into chancery. Counter-resolutions were offered by Grundy and Clayton, by way of cross-bill, and the Senate plunged into a discussion as fruitless as it was bewildering, concerning the nature and elements of the composite government we lived under. Out of this fog-bank of *a priori* reasoning emerged two chief theories and two chief disputants: the disputants Calhoun and Webster; the theories that on the one hand the constitution was a league or compact, and acted upon States, that on the other hand it was no league, no compact, but acted upon individuals. Calhoun, whose native genius and desultory training made of him a political philosopher and empiric more than a practical lawyer, had grown to look upon our federal constitution more from the Roman than the English standpoint; and to the early Roman law, with its trib- 1833.

une power, and that historical secession of the dissatisfied, he now appealed to justify the resistance of a weaker section against the stronger. The illustration was not a happy one, for not only had Roman institutions no clear counterpart to our own, but Roman secession and the creation of the tribune's veto were against patrician rule and in the interest of individual rights: that cause which creeps on over every republican system as resistlessly as the incoming wave of the ocean.

Webster, on the other hand, foremost among legal practitioners, whose whole mould was English, rested more justly upon those maxims and manners of the common law which, most of all, inspired our political system. From Saxon loins could have sprung only a Saxon constitution; and Napoleon's cession of Louisiana, early in the nineteenth century, marks the first infusion of blood from Southern Europe into the veins of our body politic. But Webster, as a disciple of the old Federalist school whose demigod was Hamilton, took no pains to discriminate those composite elements of State and national influence which our ancestors had blended with such skill and nicety, but argued the case rather on the theory that the collective American people had ordained that to which a separate confederate assent gave the sanction, and as though by the sorcery of that sanction State sovereignty melted down to solidify into a nation. This conclusion he reached, moreover, by the unprofessional course of interpreting a written instrument by particular phrases, by a preamble instead of its general tenor. A statesman who believed in nullification as little as himself detected the flaw in the argument. To Webster's plea that the Union was a government of the people and not a compact of States,

John Quincy Adams noted his dissent: "it is both, and all constitutional government is a compact."

In fact, the triumph or half-triumph of the principles of disloyalty and dissolution was more portentous of evil to this Union than tariffs, high or low. Better had it been, in view of later events, to meet the nullifiers then and there upon their own issue, and break the stubborn pride of South Carolina, than permit these heresies to be sown broadcast. Never could the country have been more favorably situated in strength and resources for such a conflict. With all the sympathy natural among Southern planters, not one Southern State was likely to join South Carolina in the pretentious right to nullify and secede. The President, himself a Southerner, but at every fibre a Union man, might have been trusted in the emergency to uphold the majesty of the laws and the rights of the people. His very name as a soldier struck terror to enemies, and made the boldest conspirator falter. That South Carolina would have yielded without bloodshed is most likely; that, madly contending, her coercion and abasement would have followed is certain. The sword of civil war is always terrible to draw; yet the worst slaughter in 1833 would have been light in comparison with that which followed the second provocation of this State less than thirty years later. But the forbearance of the stronger part of the Union equalled in these days the impatient disdain of the weaker; and temporizing remedies for relief, that mischief of all representative governments, drove the disease deeper into our system instead of eradicating it.

As for Calhoun, distrusted henceforth as a conspir-

ator by a large fraction of his former party and by the general mass of the people, his capacious intellect and energy from henceforth belonged unreservedly to the pernicious cause of which he was now by far the ablest exponent, and to the spirited State which maintained him steadily in public life. With scarcely a break in his new career, he sat in the Senate as one of its three greatest men, austere and isolated, devoted to Southern rights, and the unapproachable champion of doctrines which shook the Union to its centre. A kind master to his own slaves, he forged a chain, link by link, which should draw the whole country into the toils of slavery or break and leave slaveholders to form a new and stronger confederacy of their own. Into the mysteries of this metamorphosis he retired like a conjurer who retreats into clock-work. Chaste as snow, and in his private morals stronger than Clay or Webster, he was not less corroded than they by ambition. While he sat in his chair in the Senate, rarely conversing, unknown personally by many of those who saw him daily, strangers studied his remarkable face and figure. Miss Martineau wrote of him as a cast-iron man, and others who saw him have used similar expressions; for he seemed to harden into a creature of intellectual solitude, who opened his mouth, whether in the Senate or at his fireside, only to impress others with his political misconceptions while imbibing not the slightest impression in return. His intellect, which was one of the greatest this country has produced, narrowed its range for the sake of effect. Embodying thus a few startling abstractions, he became, by the force of his striking and singular personal character and the habit of constant reiteration in speech and of probing profoundly as into a well, the sage, philosopher, and dogmatist of the slave-

holding section, a most fascinating political teacher of the Southern youth, and withal a dangerous one. His reserved rights of States, as he worked out the theory, served for those who were in danger of being outnumbered. Well-bred, unpretentious, and full of that simple courtesy which captivates the young, and having, moreover, an unblemished integrity, and the nicest sense of personal honor in pecuniary affairs, the influence Calhoun exerted in this later episode of his long career was immeasurably increased by the almost utter absence of public responsibility. Holding aloof from political parties as though he despised their modes, and keeping his State equally disdainful of the national patronage, he was in a fit position to take always the reform side of administrative questions and to denounce debauchery in the civil service. His bitterness for the rest of his life was to thirst for the chief office, while the tantalizing wave approached and receded constantly, but never touched his lips.

In the present escape from the meshes of tariff resistance and premature rebellion, Calhoun suffered from Clay's friends some personal humiliations which rankled in his later allusions to the subject; but he schooled himself to think and speak with composure on all subjects, and never again to appear as an apologist. He had always been a man of cool self-confidence and audacity. His logical process and style of oratory were his own, and as unlike the eloquence of his great rivals as possible. He addressed his associates simply as "Senators," after the Roman fashion; his speech was direct, and rarely adorned with metaphor or anecdote, and, though trenchant, he rarely failed in courtesy. His long, coarse hair, which stood out straight from the skull for an inch and then fell over on either side of the

head, grew more gray from year to year, the lines of his face more deeply marked, his luminous eyes more sunken, his thin lips more compressed, his cheeks more hollow, the lines of his face drawn out longer. The whole aspect of the great Carolinian betrayed the fires of disappointed ambition which he was resolutely quenching; but the mischief he plotted against the free States, and the integrity of that broad Union from whose confidence he could expect no more, remained his heart's close secret.

CHAPTER XIV.

SECOND ADMINISTRATION OF ANDREW JACKSON.

§ I. Period of Twenty-third Congress. March 4, 1833-March 3, 1835.—§ II. Period of Twenty-fourth Congress. March 4, 1835-March 3, 1837.

ANDREW JACKSON, when his second administration began, was distant less than a fortnight from his sixty-sixth birthday. Of earlier Presidents chosen for two terms, both Washington and Jefferson had retired from office when somewhat younger; Madison at an age equalling almost literally Jackson's present weight of years; Monroe when somewhat older, yet before he was sixty-seven. Jackson's health was already precarious; there had been days when he was so feeble that it seemed impossible he could outlive his first term; he fought infirmities constantly, and, a childless yet domestic man, he mourned tenderly the spouse whose fresh grave he had left behind him at the Hermitage to go where fame awaited him. 1833. March 4.

What prompted, then, those plump majorities which bore this old man a second time into the civil chair, stronger in the popular support than before? Gratitude, chiefly, for his heroic service in the field, and that idolatry which military heroes command under every system of government. Heartier, too, was the recognition, because it had worked out slowly, and as though stifled by earlier misgiving. And what did the people

expect from his second administration? A policy conservative on the whole, as before, which frowned upon monopolies and guarded the humble toiler. Our country was now prosperous, at peace with the world, free from the hard pressure of debt. Mere errors and foibles might be overlooked in a magistrate so popular; and supposing his grasp should relax, the smooth current would take us safely along. While that one dark cloud, nullification, mottled the landscape in the midst of the canvass, the people drew still closer to their veteran warrior by a common instinct, and their confidence was not misplaced. Clay might be called "the great pacificator," but that prouder title, "preserver of the Union," belonged to our military chieftain.

Decked with this new honor, and triumphant, as it then seemed, over the hydra whose head was cut off, Jackson entered upon a second term, old as he was, when at the zenith of his national renown and popularity. The clouds once threatening had dispersed, and all was bright sunshine again. Had our hero laid down office at this moment instead of taking the oath anew, his fame must have been irresistible, for thus far his course had on the whole been wise as well as brilliant; he had shown great sagacity, and, being uncorrupt personally, all the odium of his patronage and mischievous appointments would have rested on the shoulders of his civil advisers and parasites; so unwilling are the people to believe any ill of their hero. Except for the spoils business and a few private quarrels, he had well maintained the national dignity. Even now, as Andrew Jackson came quietly into the Representatives' hall on the 4th of March to take the customary oath for a second term, attended by Van Buren, the Vice-President-elect, and a private secretary,

and announced to the assembled dignitaries only by the applause of spectators which greeted his entrance, his modest but distinguished mien prepossessed all hearts in his favor. Both Houses of Congress received him with every token of respect. Among foreign ministers resplendent in gold lace, and officers in their uniforms, he stood contrasted in plain black suit without a single decoration; an elderly man, tall, spare, and bony, and by no means robust in aspect. His dark-blue eyes peered out searchingly from beneath heavy eyebrows and a wrinkled forehead high but narrow; his firm-set mouth and chin worked almost convulsively with the play of his emotions, and his general features conveyed the impression of a quick and nervous energy as well as great decision of character. His thick hair, bristling stiffly up in front, was by this time perfectly white, and being brushed upward and back from the brow, gave to his long and beardless face a delicate look, almost womanly in repose, which could not be forgotten. He dressed in the plain civilian suit of the period, with watch-seal dangling from the fob, a shirt slightly ruffled, and starched collar-points standing sentinel over the chin, which rose resolute from the constraint of a stiff black stock.

In these later years Jackson often wore a pair of solemn spectacles which gave to his visage a more sage and penetrating look than ever; and when walking he would mount a light beaver hat, on which was bound his widower's weed, and carry a goodly cane adorned with a silk tassel, which he would flourish when animated like a sword to emphasize his thoughts. That game-cock look, as some well styled it, which was Jackson's characteristic expression, was softened by the lines of advancing age. No stranger encountered his hospitality

without mingling some tenderness with his admiration of the man. By dependents, by the young, by all familiars whose purpose coincided with his own instead of crossing it, Jackson was idolized. To men of cooler judgment he recalled the knight of La Mancha, though only so far as they thought to caricature the fiery zeal with which one may charge at a debatable wrong which stands in his path rather than go round; for Jackson, if a knight-errant at all in disputation, dealt at least with the realities of life and that in a method most effectual. His chivalry, too, towards the fair sex was chaste and worthy of a knight-errant of old. He impressed as one intense in his convictions rather than broad; passionate and irascible, liable to error and prejudice, vindictive even, but most courteous to meet on his own ground, and in the main true to himself, or rather to his personality for the time being, for a character so impetuous is apt to shift its logic with its environs. Andrew Jackson was neither so ignorant nor so ill-bred as rumor and the rancor of his enemies would have made out. He had a frank and manly bearing, as one who felt himself a distinguished personage in any society, and strangers from abroad who met him for the first time, prejudiced by all they had heard, were impressed by the courtesy of his bearing as well as his keen sagacity. On all public occasions his demeanor was admirable, showing the perfect democrat and man of the people, at ease with the world. He shook hands with all, conversed pleasantly, and appeared neither distant nor undignified. He spoke his mind on all subjects without affectation, and though the texture of expression might be rude, there was a body of thought beneath.

A conscious pride now swelled the President's breast,

that of holding the rank of the first citizen in America, the twice-trusted leader of the people, the vindicator, besides, of the federal Union and national supremacy. This consciousness deepened his purpose to administer affairs rightly; but unhappily for the country, as the sequel will show, success and adulation turned his head, made him more arbitrary and unmanageable than before, less disposed to heed the promptings of public opinion, or even of his own party followers. It is his second term upon which historical censure most safely fastens. He himself had looked upon his re-election canvass as a submission of his whole executive policy; but that verdict once given in his favor, he treated it as an approval at all points of whatever he had done or might do, and launched out boldly on his new career as autocrat of the democracy or tribune of the people, defying the co-ordinate departments of government as no other President has safely dared.

Familiarity and the bitterness of faction lowered the tone of Jackson's public tour of 1833 as compared with former ones of the kind. The progress of Washington, Monroe, and Lafayette had elicited a venerating applause which cemented the pride and loyal feeling of American citizenship, and society all along the route put forward its natural leaders to extend the greeting which all were zealous to express. But here the note of hospitality was pitched, as it were, from the kitchen and back-alley, and arrangements fell largely into the hands of petty dignitaries, many of them rabid partisans, about whom swarmed the mosquito breed of spoil-seekers and buzzing insignificants, each striving to cut a figure on this occasion with politic ends in view.

A thundering aggregate was the best part of the demonstration. Statesmen of the opposite party retreated into the background. Distinguished scholars and citizens came forward, it is true, in some places, to swell the meed of applause, but it was chiefly to show respect for the office, if not the officer. The honorary degree he received from the chief and oldest seat of learning in the land was generally looked upon by scholars as a piece of ridiculous flattery to a man who was neither a scholar nor the patron of scholars. The blue bloods of Boston peeped from behind the curtains as his carriage went by under military escort. Various mischances occurred on his travels which enemies turned to ridicule. While the President was on his pious pilgrimage down the Potomac, a lieutenant of the navy whose name had been struck from the rolls came on board the steamboat at Alexandria and assaulted him, escaping the general's uplifted cane after slapping his face. At the New York Battery a crowded bridge broke down just as the President's horse had passed over it, precipitating a dense mass of sycophants and spectators into the soft mud left by a receding tide, with just enough damage to make the scene laughable to those who read of it. Other mishaps were related at the expense of members of his suite who were less bold than he in the saddle. Incidents like these gave a grotesque side to the tour,together with the mill-wheel roar of the populace, the hand-shakings, the Boston dysentery, the ceremonious reception at Cambridge, where an imaginary Latin response electrified the President's classical audience, which rounded off in those stirring and patriotic phrases, "*E pluribus unum; sine quâ non!*" For there was felt a delicious absurdity in casting these academic pearls before the illiterate great, and

trying to keep up the academic conceit in doing so. In fact, the jocose reporter was now abroad for the first time, and there cropped out in the course of Jackson's tour a Colonel Jack Downing, whose letters pictured him travelling in the President's suite as intimate adviser and occasional proxy for pump-handle intercourse with the people. Jack Downing was the first of our newspaper humorists to sport with ephemeral events, the forerunner of Doesticks, Artemus Ward, Nasby, and other spurious personages of a school now familiar enough, whose mission is to lampoon the great. But neither the virulence of our better remnant nor the buffoonery of the conservative press could cool the honest enthusiasm of the common people. Jackson appeared now in the full blaze of a warrior's glory. He had conquered nullification, or at least had conquered it so far as the national spirit of fraternity in those days permitted; for we came, we saw, we compromised. A little incident connected with his entry into Boston touched the chord which was deepest in the man and his admirers. At the city line the orator who greeted him at the triumphal arch gave this brief but hearty doggerel of his own composition:

> "And may his powerful arm long remain nerved
> Who said, 'The Union, it must be preserved!'"

"Sir," was the laconic reply of the President, in a voice equally fervent, "it shall be preserved as long as there is a nerve in this arm!"

Commerce grew impatient; the new and invaluable trade of the interior increased its demands with its de-

velopment. Old people and slow have recalled with a sigh those peaceful days when a family party might charter the entire cabin of an Erie canal boat, and glide at leisure on the safest voyage of its length ever projected by civilized man, eating and sleeping on board, and varying the monotony by striding the tow-path in advance of the horses, and sitting at the next lock to see the boat come up and take its new level. The dust and jolting of the stage were avoided, though the journey should consume more time. But the anxious business man who made one of twenty-five passengers whose majority, excluded from the red-curtained sanctuary of the fair sex, were compelled to eat, dress, and sleep in an outer saloon, gave a less pleasing picture of life by such conveyance. One wearied of being drawn incessantly through tame meadow scenery by horses whose jog-trot at the end of a long rope was sobriety itself; of delays at the locks; of low bridges which passengers on the deck had to shun by lying flat at the steersman's call; of the berths which were swung at night in tiers like hanging book-shelves, for which passengers drew lots. Had canal boats continued much longer in fashion they would have been propelled by steam.

Hail to the glorious era which is now ushered in, of iron track and steam-locomotive, miraculous factors in accomplishing the social and inland changes of the nineteenth century. The world's railway system was inaugurated in 1830, when, in Great Britain, after stubborn obstacle and delay, the Liverpool and Manchester road, commenced in 1826, was formally opened for traffic in freight and passengers, provided with George Stephenson's improved locomotives,

1830.

which were found capable of travelling at the speed, astounding for those days, of thirty miles an hour. The success of this enterprise was immediate and complete, and impelled capital to create similar lines, not in Great Britain alone but in every civilized nation on the globe's surface. As happens with most great appliances to the wants of mankind, some elements of the invention far antedated its full adaptation to general purposes, and the man of bold and successful experiment trod on the bones of unhonored prophets and luckless projectors.

Our modern railway involves two consummate practical gains in transportation by land,—a gain by diminishing friction, and a gain by applying a new motive power. For the latter and more astonishing invention the world owes its gratitude to George Stephenson, the English engineer, whose rise in life from an humble firemen in the colleries endears his example to the popular heart of all countries and times. He was a self-taught man of science, and to perfect his locomotive applied his patient energy some twenty years. Yet Stephenson had the stimulus of Fulton's steamboat; nor must Trevethick's rude contrivance of 1804 be forgotten which drew ten tons of bar iron at five miles an hour, nor Watt's still earlier patent of 1784, nor earliest of all, our own Evans, whose predictions of the triumph of steam locomotion had sunk deeply into the American mind. As for the gain by diminishing friction literally imported by the word "railway," that invention in the mother country dates back at least to 1672, when coal in Northumberland and Durham was hauled by a horse from the mine to the river upon a wooden tramway furnished with flanges to keep the wheels from slipping.

Our modern railway, then, was a most precious product of mineral industry; and in the gloom and grime of a coal-pit a British mechanic was working out the next material wonder of the age, while Wellington fought the last great battle of the world where this means of locomotion could be ignored. Nor to trace out the experimental steps by which, in the course of a century or more, cast-iron and steel rails come to take the place of wooden beams, a wagon-train the single large wagon, while the flanges to prevent slipping are put upon the wheels instead of the track; we find already in the tracked road alone, aside from steam motive power, a rival of the canal sufficiently formidable.

John Quincy Adams's speech on this occasion* had been a trumpet call. As a speaker, he had not the grace of a melodious voice or an engaging manner. There was something rasping and jarring in his delivery; and when the old man undertook to make himself heard, as he sometimes did, above the din and confusion he helped most to create, his voice, though apt to break, would pierce the remotest corner of this ill-constructed chamber like the high notes of a fife. If his manner in speaking was harsh and unsympathetic, his matter when in debate was still more so. He indulged in the bitterest personalities, sarcasm, and cutting invective, exposed motives and imputed usually the most unfavorable, as his memoirs show, and in his whole course of action appeared very lightly bound to the current opinion of his time. He conciliated neither parties nor party idols. But in his courageous inde-

1835.

*March 2, 1835, when our French relations were strained.

pendence and fixedness of purpose lay the secret of his latest influence, which widened rapidly now that the rivalry of personal ambition was eliminated; for there was a sort of stubborn integrity about him, a passionate patriotism. His keen insight, too, and profound conception of coming dangers, made his guidance more powerful with his fellow-citizens than they were aware. Athletic in his studies, he dived into the depths of the subject which interested himself and the public and brought up facts and motives. With family traditions and an experience in public affairs reaching back to the sources of our government, with systematic habits of which the younger statesman might despair who was unwilling to give up the pleasures of social intercourse, Adams in his old age knew more of his country's history than any other American living. Reading and experience made him full, journalizing made him exact. Adams's personal appearance was as we have elsewhere described it, save for the encroachment of old age, which furrowed the face and silvered the scanty hair; his countenance was sober and morose almost to sorrow; his dress, unstudied and not seldom careless, betrayed a frugal and unsocial disposition; his coldness and self-absorption repelled from personal contact many who admired him at a distance. While most other public men of the day made an art of attracting acquaintance, he kept up, more, perhaps, than he was conscious of it, those invisible barriers of family and classic pride which make common men feel their inferiority. Such a man could not inspire affection coequally with respect. It was the force of his splendid example, as a Cato among degenerate men, that drew the younger, from shame or admiration, to the side of this solitary sire; combatant as he was, in debate so

bitter, of such egotism in his independence that the House listened to him with alternate good-will and anger. But this fighting man of infirm temper could always command an audience. His clock-like constancy made all insensibly lean on him. First, or nearly first, on the roll-call for some fifteen years, his unflinching vote instructed the doubtful. Sitting attentively in that familiar seat on the left of the Speaker which all strangers entering the chamber first gazed at, the illustrious ex-President grew more and more to be the monumental figure in this changing body. His seat he never changed, nor was he absent from his post of duty during the long season of his healthful old age.

"It would scarcely surprise me more," was the felicitous phrase of Everett, who now sat by him for the last time, "to miss one of the marble columns of the hall from its pedestal than to see his chair empty when the House was in session." Impetuous in his leadership when under excitement, Adams studied his own defects and tried to be temperate as well as bold.

The greatest of ambitious minds will not apprehend readily the sphere of influence which Providence has assigned it. This triumph on the floor with which Adams's more striking career now opens brought him a pique which he took to heart. His present aspiration was to enter the Senate, but the struggle of candidates being close in the Massachusetts legislature, a report of his speech, which was somewhat colored, turned the scales against him, and John Davis, the governor, a careful man to train with a party, was chosen as Webster's safer colleague. Had Adams transferred his seat to the other wing, his fame would have been eclipsed; but remaining, as before, a sage among commoners less illustrious than the Senate, closer to the

people, more turbulent, and more impressionable, his figure stands vividly out on imperishable canvas.

The political elements of the country, too long hindered in course by their triple division, now turned slowly into the channel-bed of two distinct national parties. Jackson was the personage that divided them. Against the rock of his popularity these opposition streams had dashed in vain. It was now time to unite and flow onward; and his high-handed transfer of the public deposits and Executive war upon the Bank, a policy which divided Jacksonians themselves, gave the pregnant opportunity. Events still earlier had tended to this confluence,—the national election in 1832, which tolled the knell of the Republican and Anti-Mason parties, and the troubles in South Carolina, which had not been pacified without making the President offensive to the State-rights dogmatizers of Virginia and the cotton States. Too often had Republicans and Anti-Masons been opposed ever to unite under one or the other standard, nor could Clay's grand old party survive longer the memory of its repeated defeats and schemes of policy abandoned. But now, with the tariff taken out of politics by the compromise of 1833, internal improvements a corpse, the present National Bank under sentence of death, and no sharp issue left to distract them, well might the foes of this administration shuffle off the coil of old principles and raise together a new party; protesting, embarrassing all they could the men in power, but postponing their own financial and other plans until these could be concerted at better leisure. 1834–35.

Names are things in politics; the title of a party is

its talisman to conjure with, while the real or pretended lineage which it boasts of kindles the popular imagination. This "Republican" party, offspring of the great Jefferson, who had given that moderate name as the one to conquer by, now dissolves, and another comes forth in the same plane of vision, there to shine for some twenty years and then melt into the phantom of the former party once more as the latter grows out from the camera. Shall not that process of change be repeated while lasts the republic? The new national party was the "Whig" party. The attempt to unite the whole opposition to Jacksonism under the name of Whigs began in the spring of 1834, when important State elections followed the first panic caused by the removal of the deposits and the President's firm refusal to restore them. The name itself came first into use at that time in Connecticut and the city of New York, and kindled a blaze throughout the Union, being suddenly and spontaneously adopted. By "Whig" was expressed the antagonism felt to the high prerogative or Tory doctrines of Jackson,—"King Andrew," as his enemies now called him,—who seemed to have usurped all the functions of state like an absolute monarch. The name pleased the Federal families of New England, never partial to Jeffersonian traditions, and Webster himself had, in 1804, appealed in a Federal pamphlet "to old Whigs." It pleased the State-rights men at the South, for Hayne had used the word favorably in his debate with Webster, and so had Jefferson in one of the last letters he ever wrote. These Whigs of 1834 announced themselves the true successors of the Whigs of 1776, and likened their course to that of the rebel colonists. Their liberty poles defied the hickory pole. They chose for appropriate emblems the national flag, live eagles, por-

traits of Washington. In such a party Clay and the war men of 1812 were joined on equal terms by the sons of Revolutionary sires. "I have been educated from my cradle," now proclaimed Webster, with zealous pride, "in the principles of the Whigs of '76."

Against this new party, or, perhaps we should say, this fœtus of a party, were arrayed at this time the Jackson Democracy, led by the federal office-holders, who used the full strength of their position; all under strict martial discipline. Whatever the chief ordered must be obeyed. These gloried, as well they might, in the noble name of Democrat, and stood the stronger by sinking deeper their base. Their hurrah was for Jackson, the hero of New Orleans, the foe of nullification, the champion of the people against monster monopolies and the money-power. They claimed as theirs the votes of the common people and the friendship, too, of State banks. But a new name and a new subdivision had begun to cleave the ranks of this great party in the Middle States. About New York City arose a combination opposed to all bank charters, all monopolies; this was the "Equal Rights party," a new growth from 1835. the seeds of a workingmen's league which sprang up five years earlier there and in Philadelphia and then died out. A newspaper in jest dubbed these reform Democrats "loco-focos," * and the name adhered to the "Equal Rights" faction from that time forward, and, more than this, it soon extended to the whole Democratic party of the Union, or to the Jackson-Van Buren wing at least which dominated it, and did not disappear for ten years. The leaven, too, of these "equal rights" doctrines worked in politics long after the faction which

*See the incident of the meeting in a hall and loco-foco matches, IV., 194.

first formulated them had been sold out by the demagogues who got control of it. Thus fantastical may be the circumstances by which a new political sect gains its name and its lodgment in the popular mind and becomes historical.

The great body of our American democracy has always been better in its creed than its practice. Strong naturally through that fundamental faith in human nature and in man's capacity for unrestrained living which gives it such immense scope in a growing republic, it slips back unconsciously into the mire whence the poverty-stricken millions emerge and falls too easy a prey to vice and ignorance. This is most true of manufacturing towns and the great promiscuous and populous centres where these toilers become the victims of the slums and grog-shops which must thrive by them. The drill and drum-beat of office-holders, first perfected in the Empire State, Jackson made a national regulation, and used the wide patronage of government to draw round him a prætorian band. Nothing gave our national politics so downward a course as this, for office-holding lost the starch of self-respect when men held by the tenure not of merit but political favor. The proscriptive example set by one party the other followed henceforth. Both parties might boast of great leaders, but the opposition had the more intelligent rank and file; so that, as one of our scholars has well expressed it, the Democrats had the better principles, but the Whigs the better men. Southern planters seem to have preferred the alliance of leaders at the North who, like the Gaelic chiefs, could bring their clans with them; they worked through the machinery of numbers; instinct and tradition, too, bred in them the Jeffersonian distaste for public pomp and public enterprise, and for

wealth founded in commerce and the arts; and yet the Whigs, by their devotion to the Union, gained a good footing in that section. The Southerner, on his own soil, was not unlike the Tory squire, having a feudal partiality for lands and vassals; but he was ambitious of national patronage, and this inclined him to persons wherever they could be found.

In general, the Democrats sided with persons. But the Whigs, on the other hand, leaned to property, to great public and private undertakings involving money and fostered by privilege and favoritism, and to the men engaged in them. Their party, like the earlier Federalist, soon became the favorite of northern polite circles, of scholars, professional men, the rich and prosperous, tradesmen, bankers, of such as led good society or hung to its skirts; of capitalists and those who bask in the sunshine of capital, but most of all of manufacturers and merchants; classes intelligent, yet timid lest they should lose something, and disposed to personal schemes. Thrifty farmers might join this standard, but rarely did the mechanics and laboring men, the jealous poor, unless seduced or intimidated. Unlike the old Federalist, however, the Whig, with his long training and antecedents, was in sufficient sympathy with popular institutions, only that he preponderated more to paternal and spectacular rule, while Democrats favored self-rule, even at the risk of misrule. The best practical wisdom of the day in trade and finance was at the service of this new party, the most eloquent expounders, too, of such topics; but on the other hand, with such a rank and file, there was constant danger that politics would be measured by the yardstick of expediency, and principle postponed for the sake of heaping up the im-

mediate pile. Launched into the sea of politics, this new ship, staunch and respectable, ploughed the waves under full sail, a conservative in motion.

Let us pardon something to the spirit of American liberty, which was now taking a new and freer flight. America certainly was at this time prosperous and advancing towards a richer range of life. In nations, like individuals, there comes that stage of development when the young blood leaps wildly and the sense of animal vigor tempts the healthy body to use and even abuse its functions. The swathing bands of discipline were being removed from the limbs of our common people; and why not romp and range and ravage, indulging the lusty appetite until experience has taught that salutary lesson of self-constraint which is the last corrective? Yet the discipline of society must be faulty, indeed, which leaves all to self-discipline. Among the political follies of this day the sage might perceive an increasing tendency to popular legislation, such as the abolition of the death penalty, the treatment of crime as a sort of disease to arouse one's pity, the relaxation of all punishment, all restraint. But is natural impulse the true barometer of character? Do not the wild excesses of youth sow the seeds of premature death or a corrupt old age? This administration had been taking off the bandages; non-interference was the essence of the democratic dogma; America, obeying the law of its passion, was heading to violent collision and corruption. Many of us, to be sure, despaired too easily; and Europeans held up this picture of American life as a warning to their own countries. But the spectacle of executive encroachment which this administration fur-

nished, of arraying class against class, of bull baiting, as it were, the rich and respectable for the sport of the populace, of lifting the President into a sort of monarch of the multitude, as though Congress and the judiciary did not represent the people likewise, of dispensing offices like a despot; all this had its pernicious effect in producing scenes of disorder, happily but temporary. Government for this term was one of personal example, honest but barbaric; for Jackson's policy, so nearly excellent in its main pursuit, had become imbued with a spirit of lawlessness, or at least it gave that impression, and the impression produced the injury.

A new abolition movement at the North did not, like the Quaker one of former days, respect constitutional bounds nor seek mild persuasion of the white master who held the local law in his hands. 1831. It boldly proclaimed that the laws of nature were paramount to a human institution; it preached freedom as of divine right and in defiance, if need be, of the enslaver. But in law-respecting communities like ours all such agitation bruised itself like a bird against the solid wall of the federal constitution, which, wisely or unwisely, surrounded the institution and sanctioned its existence within certain State confines. Antipathy to weaker men and races, and a dogged attachment to property as something with which none others are to interfere, save as their own property may be injured by it, are two strong traits of the Anglo-Saxon. He has a conscience, domestic virtue, and a restraining common sense to be influenced; but of woman herself Shakespeare's Petruchio talked like an Englishman rather than an Italian of his day, when he said, "I will

be master of what is mine own." And such was our slaveholder's response to the abolitionist when menaced where he stood. Pride and blind interest banded the southern masters in bristling defiance; patriots of all sections felt the constraint of the written law, and then abolitionism slid into an angry tirade against the constitution as a covenant with death and agreement with hell, and its creed became "no union with slaveholders,"—in a word, disunion, because instant and legalized abolition was impossible. We shall see in the angry years that follow southern secessionists and northern abolitionists standing upon essentially the same platform, though at opposite ends, both demanding that the American Union be broken up.

The boldest exponent of this new anti-slavery school, the pioneer and arch-agitator of immediate abolition, of conscience above the constitution, was William Lloyd Garrison. He it was who opened this new year as the editor and publisher, in Boston, of a little sheet known as the *Liberator;* sternly resolving that this paper should go forth to the world so long as he could subsist upon bread and water, or find employment with his hands. A practical printer as well as editor, he set up his own type in his obscure den of an office with precarious aid, spelling out by his metal letters thoughts which he had not committed to paper, making up his bed at night on the floor, and subsisting from day to day on modest rations procured from the humble bakery and fruit-shop. One or two liberal friends supplied money and subscriptions. Forced rapidly into notice by a free circulation southward, the *Liberator,* in its very first year, was so well known and feared that the Georgia legislature offered $5,000 for the arrest of any one found circulating it;

1831. Jan. 1.

while the conservative press of the Union denounced the editor as a fanatic, one who was madly doing all the injury possible to the cause he affected to support. Garrison had deliberately chosen at the start the radical ground he ever after maintained, retracting an assent he had formerly given to the threadbare theory of gradual and persuasive abolition. With merciless severity, he arraigned the frozen apathy of the North and the prostitution of the South on the slavery question; he could not tolerate scruples on behalf of the written law; all doughfaces, apologists, and timeservers he wrote down as traitors and cowards, and unhesitatingly he declared slavery to be a crime and the slaveholder himself a criminal. "I am in earnest," were his words, confessing his own severity; "I will not equivocate; I will not excuse; I will not retreat a single inch; and I will be heard."

A quiet and inoffensive man of aspect, bald-headed, wearing spectacles through which his eyes darted a keen but kindly glance, a strict abstainer from liquors and tobacco; and so gentle withal to look upon that Harriet Martineau declared him the handsomest man she had seen in America, in spite of an excessive self-humiliation which might be ascribed to the consciousness that he was intensely hated by good society, Garrison was impelled on his course by the harsh experience he suffered in a border slave State, which left behind a rankling sense of injury. And thus, on the free soil of Boston, the *Liberator* was born. How strangely do one's opinions change with the current of his feelings. Scarcely two years earlier, when a Vermont editor, and a promoter of negro colonization, he had written an ode for Independence day brimming with the Union sentiment, and his appeal to "a people whose hearts are

but one" jangled strangely with those bitter invectives of his new press, which declared the American constitution to be "the most bloody and heaven-daring compact ever contrived," and "in the nature of things, and according to the law of God, null and void from the beginning."

Marshall, the chief-justice, had now passed away —a man whose intellect and clear sense of justice needed no swathe of citations to pierce a legal principle to the bottom. Head of the national judiciary for nearly thirty-five years, while Presidents came and went, and swaying a bench whose membership seldom changed, by his quiet energy and force of character, his simple manners and imperturbable temper, he stole into the hearts of the American people by slow degrees while building about them an impregnable wall of precedents. The supremacy of the nation was his design, and silent continuity the source of his power. Stronger than any maker of the laws is he who can long construe them. Marshall had made the Supreme Court a bulwark against the encroaching tide of Jeffersonian Democracy; and through him Federalism impressed the image of the republic with its last and softest touches. His death left a bench of able associates, all of whom had seen political service, but none save Story ranked among famous jurists. Story's promotion to chief-justice was impossible under the present administration. A new career now awaited the court, and the hero of blood and iron impelled it forward; having fought the national judiciary, he now remodelled it. Three out of the five associates, McLean, Baldwin, and Wayne,

1835. July 6.

had already been seated under his commission; Philip P. Barbour, of Virginia, he added as the sixth, in place of Duval, who had resigned. 1836. But Jackson's triumph came when a chief-justice had to be named; and Taney, rejected so lately by the Senate as Secretary of the Treasury, because he had removed the deposits, and again thrown out by adversaries for associate justice, now reached the very pinnacle of his wishes; for scarcely had this Congress met when the President named him as Marshall's successor, and his confirmation followed.

Large space has been given in our narrative to Andrew Jackson's administration because of its strong idiosyncrasies and the character of the national events it served to develop. He has left a landmark in our annals for all time. Much is said of the influence of ideas in producing history, but the really controlling influence of this epoch was that of personal example. And never did popular parties opposed to one another respond to personal guidance so heartily as those which now grew up under the leadership of those fierce combatants, always at variance with each other, Clay and Jackson; the one combining popular elements too intelligent and opinionated not to show signs of jealous dissension, the other having a blind democracy for a nucleus so dense, so devoted, and withal so carefully disciplined, that rivalry was kept low and political mutiny punishable as though by martial law. Strong in all his traits of character, his vices as well as his virtues, Jackson's public example was one for positive good and positive evil,—a mixture of brass and clay. There could be nothing negative about him. What he purposed, that

he put his hand to and bore it safely through. His mind moved rapidly, and with an almost lightning-like perception he had resolved the point while others were deliberating; and right or wrong, he was tenacious of his conclusion, and fought to have his way like one who felt it shame not to win. There was no twilight of dubiety about him; he knew, and knew earnestly; and within the steel horizon which bounded his vision he could pierce to the circumference in all directions. As his intellect admitted of no half-truth, so did his nature revolt at bargains and compromises, such as Clay, his mortal enemy, was an adept in arranging; but with him it was to conquer or die on every occasion, win a clean victory or endure a clean defeat. This temper, as those who knew him best have admitted, gave him a load to carry all his life; every step he took was a contest; and yet, if ever mortal may be said to have triumphed in what he undertook, every contest was a victory. Jackson could not live without a quarrel; and, though capable of strong and lasting attachment, friends and enemies often changed places as his ambition developed, and no one could remain long in his confidence who did not humor his foibles and bend to his purpose. Conscientious difference of opinion he knew not how to tolerate, and friendship that was not all in all was not at all. Gratitude implied a self-abasement, and he felt it for no one; even coequal companionship was something of a yoke to him; it was admiring devotion that won his heart, and the better angel of his nature was compassion. But though knightly towards women, tender to children, the young, the gentle, the fallen, to all who nestled up confidingly, his contempt for weakness disposed him to snatch whatever he wanted, regardless of others' rights. He could

bully a sister republic to get her territory, and drive the half-tamed Indian from his homestead and the white man's neighborhood at the point of the bayonet, and all this with hardly the pretence of compunction. Frank and sincere in the main, and wishing to be thought so whatever ill might be imputed to him, of manners cordial and graceful, he was a generous host at home, and after his own ideal a southern gentleman. Yet for all this he had something of the borderer's fierce disposition; with the men among whom he had been born and bred might made right, and honor was vindicated by a brace of pistols at ten paces. Such a citizen could never have been exalted to national distinction in the courtlier age of the republic, and his fame waited long for civil recognition, even after his military success. Springing up out-of-doors and in the free sunshine, rough contact with mankind in a pioneer society gave him an education; and as a slaveholder, long used to an easy independence and to being waited upon, he acquired that self-confidence in later life without which consciousness of merit must fail of renown. As chief magistrate he was an innovation upon American life, a novelty,—in some sense a protest against the past. He was the first great product of the West, humanly speaking, Clay only excepted, whose genius partook more of Eastern example. He was the first President of this Union chosen from the west of the Alleghanies and a pioneer State; the first ever borne into the chair with a general hurrah and no real sense of civil superiority for the office. He was the first President from what we call the masses; the first whose following vulgarized, so to speak, the national administration and social life at the capital. Old age and debility had much to do with the venerating applause which con-

stantly followed him, and forced even his whims to be respected; the people seemed anxious to make amends for so long neglecting to advance him.

Jackson ruled by his indomitable force of will, his tenacity of purpose, courage and energy. He did not investigate nor lean upon advice, but made up his mind by whatever strange and crooked channels came his information, and then took the responsibility. Experience made him rapid rather than rash, though he was always impulsive; and he would despatch the business which engaged his thoughts, and that most thoroughly. Though stretched on the bed of sickness, he held the thread of his purpose, where none could take it from him; his will rallied and beat under the body. He decided affairs quickly, and upon impulse more than reflection; but his intuitions were keen, often profound, in politics as well as war. His vigor as an Executive at his time of life was truly wonderful. He left nothing in affairs for others to finish, betrayed no sign of fear or timidity, shrank from no burden however momentous, but marched to the muzzle of his purpose, and, like an old soldier, gained half the advantage in a fight by his bold despatch and vigor. The night march and surprise were points he had learned in Indian warfare; and were it war or politics, he carried out what he had fixed upon with constant intrepidity. This intrepidity went with a conscious sense of duty; for, though a Cromwell in spirit, Jackson's ambition was honestly to serve his country. Loyalty to the Union, sympathy with the American common people, were the chief impulses of his being, for all he loved power; and hence a majority was almost sure to sustain him. Courage and directness the people admire in any man, and a sordid or usurping nature they are apt to dis-

cover. Jackson had the Midas touch, which could transmute whatever he handled, if not into solid gold, at least into a substance of popularity. And yet no servant of the ballot-box felt less the need of courting popularity, or of waiting for public opinion to bear his plans forward. Lesser statesmen might be exponents, but he led on, leaving the public to comment as it might.

We have intimated more than once in our narrative that Jackson was neither so frank nor so chivalrous as he passed for, nor yet so little of a politician. Was there ever a great general who did not employ strategy? Jackson could dissimulate, and in his very maladies he gained some crafty advantage. One of his warmest admirers has pronounced him a consummate actor, whose art often imposed the policy of rashness. Van Buren found him a man guarded and self-controlled where he had seemed impetuous. He could put off an inconvenient friendship so as to make his friend appear the wrong-doer. Of darker duplicity signs, though inconclusive, are not wanting. But his blunt perceptions of right and wrong, his brutal obstinacy, and the tail-wagging subservience which he exacted from those about him did the country he meant to honor an irreparable mischief. While President his irascibility forced those who would influence him to take to tortuous methods. Cabinet officers, men far better versed in affairs than himself, had to fall in with his opinions, and seem to yield; overreaching, if they might, when executing his orders, or bringing the subject up again. This, and his preference for the kitchen advisers, had something to do with his frequent cabinet changes. All had to pay court to get on. Van Buren earned most from his intimacy, playing the faithful hound, and it

cost him dearly in the end. The circle surrounding the old man fed him with gross flattery. All this gave soon the smirch to decent self-respect. Personalism came to tincture all politics, all policies, all politicians, under his arbitrary and exacting administration; and the painted Jezebel of party patronage seized upon the public trusts for her favorites. Such a state of things was sure to breed corruption sooner or later. Prætorian bands showed the first symptom of Rome's decay. Bands of office-holders, united by the necessity of keeping the spoils and salaries from other bands equally ravenous, may prove an early symptom of our own, if the people submit to it. Personally honest and unstained by bribery, Jackson played nevertheless into the hands of others who traded upon his violence; greedy followers milked the offices they had gained by partisan service. Even the battery of the National Bank, in which he led off, had its pugilistic aspect; money put up against money, and monopoly fighting monopoly.

Jackson's illiteracy is admitted by his admirers; but opponents of his day made too much of it, as though administration were a matter of mere scholarship. Longer experience in popular self-government has dispelled that illusion. It was of greater note that his strong personal feelings mingled in all he said or did, and that opponents were colored by his temperament. In conversation he interested, whether he convinced or not, being clear, earnest and straight to the point both in thought and expression; and while no question admitted of two sides to his mind, his own was fearlessly grasped. As his speech was sagacious and incisive, in spite of slips in grammar or mispronunciation, so he could write with powerful effect, though no scholar in the true sense, and in personal controversy he was one

to be feared. His state papers engaged able minds in and out of his cabinet, yet the direction of thought, the statement of policy, the temper of the document, were his own. Others might elaborate the argument for him or polish and arrange the composition, but, after all, his was the central thought; and he would flourish over the paper with a rapid pen, and a huge one, until sheet after sheet lay before him glistening with ink and glowing with expression as though it were written in his heart's blood. That there were misspelt words to be corrected, or awkward sentences to be trussed up afterwards by his secretary, is not to be denied. In short, Andrew Jackson fed little upon books and much upon experience with unconventional life and human nature; but he had what is essential to eminence in either case, a vigorous intellect and a strong will. In the conduct of affairs he took advice wherever he saw fit, and like a commander secretive of his own plans, tested the views of his council and then made up his own mind.

Such was the remarkable man whose shaping influence in national affairs made him the transcendent figure of these times; in him of all Americans the Union, for thirty years prior to the eventful 1860, was personified. In faults and merits alike he was so great, and he produced so much that was good and so much that was vicious, that the historian may well be perplexed to trace the blending line. This warrior first entered office with an easier task before him than any of his predecessors, and twice when he took the official oath he might have shaped his course peacefully to the popular predisposition, which was to reward a veteran soldier with the highest mark of honor. Twice, however, as we have seen, did he surprise expectation, both

by the vitality of his rule and his peculiar aptitude for fighting out some new political policy. He fought well, as he had always done, and was as pertinacious in returning to the attack and mortifying the foes who had wounded his friends. Quarrels and bad blood made the large component of these eight years' policy; the fight of factions made the spoils of office, for the first time, a national principle; the fight with the Bank, originating, most likely, in personal offence, was a personal one to the close; and but for his personal rupture with Calhoun one may well doubt whether nullification would ever have raised its reptile head. Jackson's best act was to trample down that heresy, though the snake was only scotched, and his worst was to debauch the public service. In the one, as in the other, his example long outlived him. But most pernicious of all, in quick results, he initiated the treacherous policy of Mexican dismemberment and annexation for the sake of slavery; from a motive pseudo-patriotic, however, to preserve the equilibrium of the Union, and with a responsibility quite indirect for the worst that followed after he had set the ball in motion. As for the rest, his foreign policy was brilliant and sagacious; his stand on the tariff and internal improvements judicious for the times; his course to the Indians, though harsh, not without justifying reasons. He paid off the national debt, like the punctilious planter he was, who abhorred all debt, public and private, and with real opportunity might have left to his country some plan for disposing of a national surplus instead of leaving himself on record as a censurer of all plans. Upon his financial policy our narrative has dwelt already, and the full effect of that glorious folly, the transfer of the deposits, will soon be shown. With all his fervent zeal, there

were limitations to his theory of public banking, limitations to his theory of a fraternal Union.

No President ever ruled these United States in times of peace with a personal supremacy so absolute as the two great chieftains of our Democracy, Jackson and Jefferson, though in methods and character they were so little alike. The one was a born manager of men, the other a stern dictator; the one philanthropic to the socially oppressed; the other a hater rather of the social oppressor; each, however, influenced by a love of country which was a ruling passion, by constitutional restraints somewhat independently interpreted, and, in later life at least, by an unconscious bias to the side of the South whenever slavery was threatened with violence by northern agitators. This last in Jefferson weakened his practical efforts in the anti-slavery cause, though he was anti-slavery in sentiment to the end; in Jackson, who thought himself no worse for being a master, if a kind one, it stimulated the determination to make his section strong enough to hold out against the abolitionists, for abolitionists and nullifiers were all hell-hounds of disunion. Jefferson had gently manipulated Congress; Jackson ruled in defiance of it, and by arraying the people, or rather a party majority on his side, against it, until the tone of his messages, if not really insolent, was that of conscious infallibility. Congress is elastic, however, and easily rallies, being naturally the encroaching power under our co-ordinate system. But as for the people, the danger grew that their will in elections would be fettered by machinery and machine managers. In these years the Democracy made rapid strides, and the nation, too, advanced in

power. Self-confidence increased, and a domineering disposition. There was a vigorous vulgarity about this administration at every point, resolution, and a passionate love of danger. And yet at home, factions and mob violence were always on the increase; and though the principles of national institutions and of fundamental authority were discussed as never before nor since, there never was a time short of civil war when lawlessness gained so nearly the upper hand in the community. The most dangerous infractions of the constitution are those not violent enough to provoke the governed to open resistance, and of such there were many. Jackson's school of philosophy was not tolerant and reconciling. There were too many friends to reward, too many foes to punish. Class was inflamed against class, the poor showed their teeth at the rich; and while the Union was constantly held up for reverence, and even idolatry, the joints were strained, the fraternal bonds parted, and men of both sections began to feel themselves less unionists at heart than before. And thus, though decked out with glory, did Jackson's iron rule plough long furrows in the back of the republic whose scars are still visible.

CHAPTER XV.

ADMINISTRATION OF MARTIN VAN BUREN.

§ I. Period of Twenty-fifth Congress. March 4, 1837-March 3, 1839.—§ II. Period of Twenty-sixth Congress. March 4, 1839-March 3, 1841.

FINANCIAL crash and widespread disaster closely succeeded Jackson's retirement from office; and Van Buren, his cherished successor in office, had to provide some means for replenishing an empty public treasury. The new doctrine was to place the general government in all its dealings on a specie basis and make it the custodian in its own vaults of its own funds. This doctrine of the government its own depository, which the new President's message for the first time unfolded, was elaborated in a report which accompanied it from the Secretary of the Treasury. 1837.

Such was the plan of the "independent treasury," as its friends called it, or, as more commonly styled, of the "sub-treasury." It was simple, natural, and easy to comprehend; taking, in fact, the exact diagonal from the forces which so lately were opposed. But this was an innovation, and all innovations have prejudice to surmount, and that most formidable of all forces, the force of habit. Trade had climbed and clustered for so many years about the tower of a National Bank that its now prostrate vines felt the want of that same solid masonry to sustain them. Then, again, the State bank

interest, still powerful, hoped to regain its favors. Other objections occurred at once. Would not an independent treasury increase instead of diminishing the dangerous power of the Executive? And granting that the system might work well while the Union spent its whole income, paying out as fast as it received, these were still surplus years of revenue with the crisis once surmounted; and with ten millions at least, and perhaps twice and thrice or even four times that amount, of the precious metals locked up idle in the public safes a business convulsion was certain; for in finance to hoard is to throw into disorder. In the present universal depression this looked, too, like a direct attack on the whole banking and credit system of the country, like an effort by an administration whose sincerity was not greatly confided in to subvert all banks and all bank circulation. The solid objection to the new proposal lay, however, in its incompleteness; a medicine was offered, but not a panacea. It met the immediate question of affording a safe place for the public deposits and might develop an exchange system practicable enough for the wants of the government; but the broader question of a safe and uniform national currency it left untouched, uncured. From this point of view, indeed, the Van Buren plan looked like a selfish abandonment of the people's ship in distress. Instead of helping the craft to weather the gale the government "took the long boat."

The independent treasury idea was the lasting fruit of this administration, and to Van Buren belongs the credit of producing it. It was sound and excellent so far as it went, and, though the plan helped sink the originator, it indicated his courage and capacity. A persistent opposer of banking privileges, the thought germinated early in his mind; and while he consulted

others he was dominant in giving form and shape to the measure. No one aided in embodying the idea in legislation so much as his friend Silas Wright, the influential senator from Van Buren's own State, and the purest man of the whole Albany regency.

The alliance of Seward, Weed, and Greeley was a powerful one in the Empire State in Whig times to contend with the Albany regency, its natural antagonist. Their talents well blended to counteract their several faults. 1839-40.

Young Seward was by nature humane and progressive, a born statesman of the sanguine and speculative school founded by Jefferson. His training and antecedents, indeed, were Jeffersonian; but anti-Masonry brought him into contact with John Quincy Adams at an impressionable age, and Adams's personal example became the guiding star of his existence. Seward soon came to detest slavery, though bearing himself like a philosopher; his nature was genial and attractive, and his art always remarkable in avoiding personal collision under whatever provocation, and yet wherever placed he did not fail to show at least the mettle of his conviction. He disliked pomp and ceremony, and it amused him in these early years to see how common men would pass him by and single out some man in the room of portly figure and imposing presence, like Granger or Fillmore, as their ideal of a chief magistrate. A generous and free liver, as his means enabled him to be, he was accustomed to spend all his official salary in maintaining his station, so that none could say that he made money in public employ. But while above all suspicion of greed or corruption, a foible was his dis-

regard of public economies; for, like a true disciple of Adams, he inclined strongly to grand schemes of internal improvement which the State was to prop up, and his innate tendencies were to paternal and even prodigal government. This desire to enrich and benefit, however, was founded in his philosophy, and so was his optimism, which presented always the bright side of things. He had great faith and forecast, but with somewhat of that prophetic conceit which among fallible mortals leads in some momentous crisis to a false prediction. Most of his predictions startled by their truth, a few proved false; but the line between prophecy and policy was not always to be discerned in his conduct of affairs, for his worst fears were expressed in private confidence, while he seemed always to lead on the people from hope to hope. In this is true statesmanship, and Seward never forgot in the sage a statesman's limitations to the best attainable rather than the greatest abstract good.

Seward's friend, Thurlow Weed, was of a coarser fibre, but resolute, devoted to his friends, full of energy, persistent, shrewd, and not over-scrupulous, a man of the machine, and robust in his partisanship as he was in physique. Such men are indigenous to American politics, where the next power to the throne is the power behind it, and every great statesman needs his political manager to keep him in relation with his constituents. The political manager of these days was the journalist, whose reward came in the growth of his subscription-list and such rich jobs as that of the public printing. It was Weed who discovered Horace Greeley, a poor young printer and unthrifty editor, in the great city, and induced him to publish in Albany a Whig paper for the State campaign of 1838 styled the

Jeffersonian. The admirable quality of Greeley's penwork had attracted the notice of the shrewd party manager. Greeley's paper did well its part towards the election of Seward, and then Greeley returned to his crust and his attic. A young flaxen-haired youth, stooping, near-sighted, ill-dressed, and ill at ease in polished company, Greeley was a born journalist, of the kind to impress the public by his sincere and fervent convictions. Though hungering for some one of those snug salaried places which Seward now dispensed, but which he was too proud to ask for, he reaped the rewards of his new alliance in the field overlooked by many an aspirant—that which he was most fit for. Being a man of crotchets and philanthropic blunders, Greeley, open and susceptible as the day, embraced each new "ism" which promised to regenerate mankind. He was no practical administrator, and hence, superior as he was to Weed in mental calibre and loftiness of purpose, he could no more have filled Weed's place in politics than Weed could have filled his own.

Van Buren's personal character and administration may be summed up briefly. He was the first of American Presidents during nearly half a century whose lineage was Dutch instead of British; the first, moreover, who was not born a British subject, but on free American soil. But what was of more immediate consequence, Van Buren was the typical New Yorker of public life and the first President of this Union from that great middle section where politics have responded most to practical management.

When in high station Van Buren tried to dispel the impression that he was a man of intrigue; but the more

he tried, the more of an intriguer he was thought to be. Though subtle rather than strong, he certainly had talents far beyond the average of public men, not as a political organizer only, but in the higher range of statesmanship. He was a good diplomatist, a fair administrator; his democracy, albeit a little servile to the many, was wholesome and robust. He steered between North and South on irritating subjects better than he received credit for doing. As President, Van Buren was still detestable, in the use of the public patronage and showed corrupt tendencies; but he should be credited with moral courage and sagacity in the leading measure by which his administration is distinguished. The sub-treasury plan, the final divorce of public and private finances, was his own; he brought his party to that policy and shared a national defeat rather than surrender it. This is enough to stamp him as a statesman. Then, again, he resisted schemes for annexing Texas in the interest of slavery.

Van Buren in personal appearance was below the middle height and inclined to corpulence. The familiar names "Matty" and "Little Van" were not ill bestowed upon him, whether in ridicule or admiration. His blue eye was quick and searching; his hair, turned to gray, stood crisply out on both sides of his broad forehead; and, with his bald head and handsome countenance, he had a decidedly English look, as of one prosperous, benevolent, shrewd, an alert looker upon the busy world about him, satisfied with himself, but withal somewhat cynical of men and their motives. Had he been given more to field sports and fox-hunting, one might think of him as an American Lord Palmerston, such was his air of bright and breezy good humor and

his princely affectation. He valued the philosophic temper of Franklin and Madison, and made much commodity of his little thoughtful civilities. To Madison he has sometimes been likened for calmness, discretion, gentle manners, and the remarkable facility of avoiding personal quarrels. That parallel might be drawn out further; for Madison and Van Buren each succeeded a remarkable political leader, whose personal friendship advanced him; each had held the portfolio of State; each suffered, too, by the inevitable contrast with a predecessor who was taller in every sense; each was overtaken by a blinding storm which was stirred before his coming; and while neither retired from the Presidential office with the fame he had hoped for, both lived long enough to take a calm retrospect, and see in troublesome times that the people were better instead of worse for the policy each had pursued. But here the parallel must end. Madison was as far above the suspicion of hypocrisy or servility as Van Buren was made opprobrious by it. His mild and unobtrusive consideration for others was of a very different flavor from Van Buren's imperturbable vivacity which showed the desire to half conceal, or his cautious expression of views, feeling the way with subtle reservations. Van Buren was bolder, as well as more selfish, in the conduct of affairs. Madison, indeed, was rather a timid Executive, having been little trained to take responsibility; but for patriotic purpose he was more trustworthy and more trusted; and, in fact, having been re-elected to office, he carried the country through the crisis for which men had reproached his party, and retired victorious. But for Van Buren, victory, even such as his policy was capable of winning, had to be

postponed; for, to begin with, the people mistrusted his sincerity and feared that his sub-treasury was the blind for some deeper scheme. The name of demagogue long adhered to him, though time brought a better appreciation of his genuine merit.

CHAPTER XVI.

ADMINISTRATION OF WILLIAM HENRY HARRISON.

Period of Twenty-Seventh Congress. March 4, 1841-April 4, 1841.

HERE, as the web began to weave, the wheel was broken. The great Whig victory of 1840 lost its force. Harrison, never robust of body, had been borne into the vale of years by temperance and the routine of mild activity. He had not the defiant mettle, the indomitable energy, the pride of will, of that other old soldier, to whose spoils policy he fell the first victim. The incessant strain of public care, consequent upon a campaign of unparalleled excitement and the fatigues of his triumphant journey, agitated and wore him down faster than they could conceive who drained his vitality so freely. Generous and hospitable, he indulged his friends to his own destruction. His wife had not yet joined him, and the White House life was homeless. Busy from sunrise until nearly midnight with company and affairs, except for an hour each day which he passed with his cabinet, he had neither privacy nor leisure. His first purchase as chief ruler was a Bible and prayer-book; and after his daily devotions he would take a morning walk, often bringing back some old friend to breakfast with him. Careless exposure one morning brought on a chill which ran into pneumonia and a profuse diarrhœa; his feeble frame succumbed, and he died calmly on the 4th of April, one month from the date of his

1841.

inauguration. In his last incoherent utterance he seemed to be enjoining upon another the trust which slipped from his ghostly grasp: "Sir, I wish you to understand the true principles of the government; I wish them carried out; I ask nothing more."

This was the first time that death had invaded the White House or smote the chief of the people, and so sudden was the shock that the nation seemed stunned by this calamity. Harrison was loved by all the people, and even party opponents acknowledged his benevolence and high purpose. The tokens of national sorrow and respect were universal. At the capital the obsequies of the dead President, hastily arranged, were as splendid as so quiet a season would permit in that pilgrim city, and pageants followed in more populous places to pay imaginary honors. The 7th of April was the day of the funeral. The north portico of the mansion was hung with unaccustomed black. They who had hustled in its halls with headlong zeal a few days before trod gently and spoke in whispers. The body, in its leaden casket, was taken from the East Room where it had lain in state on a bier heaped with flowers; it was placed in an open funeral car, which stood at the north portico, covered with black velvet and drawn by six white horses, each with its colored groom. A wailing of trumpets arose, inexpressibly mournful, and a beating of muffled drums, as the military escort began its march down the avenue with arms reversed. The sky was overcast, and only a stray sunbeam from the clouds would shine upon the sable car with its nodding plumes as the procession moved eastward in slow array, minute-guns firing. Rounding the deserted Capitol, whose eastern steps, where Harrison so lately stood, led upward, as a mourner might fancy, like

Jacob's ladder, it approached and entered the Congressional burying ground. Here the present obsequies ended. The last expression of Harrison's waxen face was gentle and serene.

Harrison died honorably poor, as became his career. Congress, when it met, made an appropriation for his funeral expenses, and voted a year's salary to his widow. Here and in many States the legislatures testified respect for his memory. At the request of Cincinnati friends, the late President's remains were removed in the summer to his family home; and at North Bend, near the Ohio's bank, the good gray head was laid quietly to rest.

"Heaven," says Wise, of Virginia, alluding, long years after, to Harrison's death, "saved him from the fate of Actæon; for, had he lived until Congress met, he would have been devoured by the divided pack of his own dogs." The figure is a striking one, but not appropriate. The new President had his leash well in hand; they of the pack that hunted were scenting the game; the few that barked could not have harmed him. Harrison was strong without Virginia, his native State, and his rock of strength was the solid confidence of the Union. The people's candidate in the critical times at hand would have proved himself, had he lived, the people's friend. It must not be forgotten that he was trained a civilian not less than a soldier; a party man, though a moderate one, and by no means incompetent to his task, which was to conciliate confidence. The country has had abler men than Harrison, but few whose death, coming when it did, was in so real a sense a public calamity.

CHAPTER XVII.

ADMINISTRATION OF JOHN TYLER.

§ I. Period of Twenty-seventh Congress. April 4, 1841-March 3, 1843.—§ II. Period of Twenty-eighth Congress. March 4, 1843-March 3, 1845.

THE heir-apparent of blood royal may come some day to the throne, and royal title itself turns by premeditation upon the accidents of human life; but no Vice-President of the United States ever was or ever will be voted for in a genuine expectation that he will be more than a Vice-President while the four years last.

1841. April.

But now the contingency had happened, and, for the first time, Heaven's stroke had fallen on the highest incumbent of this great Republic as though he had been the humblest of the people. The supreme executive title devolved in a moment without the intervention of a voice or vote. John Tyler ruled in the place of the good Harrison. Who is John Tyler? it was asked. And what is the status of one who succeeds to the vacant place under such circumstances? For all were stunned and bewildered in this first shock of affliction. The successful Whigs could not realize at once the magnitude of their loss. But it was true that they had conquered by the uncertain sign of promising some change for the better; and they had really hung the whole framework of their principles upon the thread of a single human life, and that a frail one; they had sup-

posed, and with reason, that Harrison's judgment would accord with the common sense of the situation. It was now time to scrutinize the record of John Tyler as it had not been scrutinized before. This youngest of all Presidents ever to that date seated in office, fifty-one years of age when he took up his abode at the White House, was in no sense a national man nor even a sound Whig. Taken upon his antecedents, he was of those who skirt the border-line of parties close enough to tempt either to bid for him when in a strait. By his own statement his course had been "almost that of a neutral" up to the time when he took his seat in the United States Senate, though constantly in the public service from the time of turning his majority, whether as legislator, Congressman, or governor of his native State. But he voted in the Senate as an independent Democrat; and Clay himself in 1841 spoke bitterly of their twenty years of intimate friendship, during thirteen years of which they had never voted together on a single question of principle.

In principle, to speak truly, Tyler was consistent only in being for State rights and a southern man to the core. Though gifted with tact, courtly manners, and a pleasing temper, he had within him the impetuous spirit of a slave-driver. Northern needs and northern society he did not and could not comprehend; his sympathies were not national, but to bend the nation to the ambition of his section. He was a Virginian of the later type, prouder of his State than the Union. "Do you believe," asked he, when the Missouri question was under debate, "that southern bayonets will ever be plunged in southern hearts?" In that debate he took the extreme ground, for so early a day, that Congress had no constitutional right to prohibit slavery in the

territories; and we have already seen him in 1833, when South Carolina was in revolt, casting his solitary vote in the Senate against the bill for enforcing the supremacy of the Union. Jackson's heroic attitude on this latter occasion, rather than his interference with the National Bank, was what estranged Tyler from the Democratic party. Being a fluent and decidedly emotional writer and speaker, he was quite given to asseveration. His conscience, according to his own description, was exceedingly tender; but what seemed stranger still, it was sensitive to the trivialities of a dispute, while callous concerning the deeper moralities involved. It was a conscience of overburdened ingenuity, like Hogarth's machine for drawing the cork from a bottle. Thus, Tyler deplored the existence of slavery, but since it had been planted here without his fault he would tolerate no interference with it; he thought nullification wrong, but it was a greater wrong to coerce a nullifying State; Benton's expunging resolution he utterly abhorred, not in the sense that the original censure of the President ought to stand, but because it was perjury, blasphemy, or some other terrible moral enormity for him to vote to expunge when the constitution expressly declared that "each house shall keep a journal." Such was the sacrificial disposition which statesmen showed to throw themselves under the wheels of that great Juggernaut of federal compact; perish the heavens, sooner than permit the slightest crack in the precious porcelain bequeathed by our fathers. In fact, through Tyler's whole political career to this point one may discern the habit of moving upon fine and subtle distinctions, such as a special pleader delights in, a squirrel-like propensity to leap from tree to tree without touching the ground. Like the squirrel's bushy tail, he carried his

record behind him; and one agony of his conscience was to reconcile his later acts with his earlier, regardless of the saying that only simpletons never change their opinions.

It was high time to dissipate that pleasing spectral illusion that slavery was merely local in its influence, and concerned no State outside the southern galaxy. As a social principle, in fact, slavery was as contagious as freedom, and possessed the same power of expansion. Already had this institution brought our federal government into direct collision with Great Britain and other European countries which had enlisted in the moral crusade; it struggled to preoccupy the virgin soil of national territory in place of freedom; it contended for the balance of national power; and the oldest and weightiest States of the Union were at this moment in serious controversy over the obligation which freedom owed to rivet the chains of bondage. This last phase of the conflict deserves here a passing notice. Slaveholders claimed the right to retake such of their runaways as might have escaped into a free State; but did this compel free States to play the hound for the master, or to deprive free colored men of their liberty in a free jurisdiction, or to send their own white citizens to slave soil to suffer the vengeance of certain death, whose worst offence, even had they committed any, was to help a poor fellow-creature to become his own master, as God gave him the natural right? It was impossible that North and South in this era should harmonize on these points or even discuss them dispassionately; and what should impress posterity is, that

1841–43.

slavery asked more of the Union, far more, than to be left alone, to use its own municipal authority to sustain its abhorred system. In these very years Governor Seward, of New York, was still in correspondence with southern State executives over the surrender of white citizens of the North as fugitives from justice on the charge of stealing slaves; Georgia coupled a like requisition of her own to that from Virginia, which the Empire State refused to grant; and Virginia and South Carolina then combined to pass local laws, by way of retaliation, which exposed all New York vessels arriving in their ports to the ignominy of search and the imprisonment of colored seamen. On the surrender, too, of fugitive slaves there was angry collision between free and slave States.

The single-term theory of the Presidential office did not originate, as many have supposed, with the Democracy. It was a Whig theory, and the theory above all others, if not the only one, to which Harrison in his great campaign had committed himself; the theory which Tyler, too, then indorsed with a glittering and specious warmth of sentiment. By this early commitment the Whig hero meant to strengthen his protest against Jacksonian tendencies to autocratic dominion; but more than that he meant to assuage the secret bitterness of party leaders outranking him in point of public service who were loyally fighting his battle. Before the Whigs came into power, every President, of whatever politics, had stood for his second term, and under him, necessarily, the party failed or maintained its ground. This appeal to the people midway in one's eight years' service, for approval or

1843.

disapproval, Jefferson had highly commended in practice. But the Democrats presently borrowed this Whig lightning for their own purpose, and adopted the one-term maxim, in real effect, as a sort of corollary to the spoils maxim of rotation in office, and because, in truth, after Jackson's death, no one led them conspicuous above all others.

There is very little, in plain truth, to commend such a maxim apart from the special circumstances to which it may apply. Popular experience still favors a second term where good purposes are to be carried to a fuller fruition and the Executive who returns to the polls is trusted. The critic of our constitution on this point can only regret that the written law fixes no limit, but trusts to precedent alone and the common jealousy, that the second term shall be the last. As for Tyler's eager prevarication on this point we may treat it lightly, for an expectant estate differs from a reversion; but his grave blunder was in not better apprehending that true policy, if not honor, dictated that he should follow closely on the lines his dead leader had marked and forego ambitious aspirations which there was not one chance in a hundred for gratifying. First in striking out to be re-elected, next in assuming a co-ordinate power to legislate against the will of Congress, Tyler defiled Harrison's sepulchre, and after committing himself to Whig ideas acted like the stubbornest of Jacksonians. Jackson himself had not vetoed party measures without a keen regard to good policy and the party welfare. No one who knew John Tyler believed that his course was ruled by a sensitive conscience, no one took his written reasons for the true and only ones. His temper was fanned into a flame, his vanity dazzled, his good-nature abused by the clique about him until the

giant-killer fancied himself growing into a giant himself. To kill Clay and be elected for another term was the gravitating law of this whole unprincipled administration.

For the first time in American history a President deserted the party which elected him, and after failing signally to recruit a party of his own marched over to the enemy. Consequently, to "Tylerize" has been a word of reproach in our politics ever since. His excuse was that the Whigs would not support his measures; but his duty was to support theirs, and the more so, since accident gave him an authority to which they never meant to exalt him. The Whigs soon saw the ghost he was pursuing. Unseduced by the patronage he could offer, they rallied round Clay as though to atone for their former neglect, and the Whig press throughout the Union ran up the Clay flag when the peerless Senator retired from Congress.

But the volatile Virginian had already placed a firebrand behind each camp which would soon force parties from their position. That firebrand was the Texas slaveholders' annexation. Abhorrent as the whole scheme had been to North and West, and the great majority, indeed, of our population, it drew the sympathy, active or inert, of a large fraction of the South, whose institution felt more and more the need of some new guaranty against the assaults of the abolitionists. To our planters this union of Texas with the United States seemed natural, like the commingling of kindred drops of water, for this colony was of their own planting; it was Tennessee and our States on the gulf that conquered the Mexican army at San Jacinto. But natural gravitation would not have absorbed Texas into the American Union in fifty years; for annexation meant

sectional and not national advantage in this age, and the bitterest heartburning.

The effort had been made to infect the whole country with this Texas fever and it had failed. There was no sanction from Congress, no favorable expression of public sentiment in favor of annexation; the whole movement of the Tyler guard in that direction was secret and stealthy, like a night-march.

The Democratic conventions of 1844, one of which nominated James K. Polk, and the other John Tyler, are memorable for the transmission of their proceedings by electric telegraph. Congress having lately appropriated thirty thousand dollars to test Morse's invention, a wire was run between Washington and Baltimore, and communication fully opened three days before. Messages of congratulation had sped by this occult messenger, but the first practical use of the spark was to give Congress the news of these two conventions. Every half-hour the strange little machine at the east end of the Capitol reported the progress of meetings held forty miles away, and written bulletins posted up on the wall of the rotunda gave quick intelligence of the news. Silas Wright was the first of mortal men to receive and decline a nomination by electric telegraph,* and the event had its public bearing on affairs. A new social force was born of the nineteenth century,—the dissemination and collection of news on the instant. Jove's own messenger sped from this date for mankind. By another year plans were developed for extending the electric wires to New York and more distant points, making great changes in the modes of journalism and

* For Vice-President upon the Polk ticket.

business, and already were predicted electric lights, electric signals, and electric fire-alarms as future adaptations of this most magical and mysterious of natural agents.

When the Texas joint resolution came back to the House with the Senate amendment tacked to it, conscience Whigs made a last effort to load down the whole subject till the session expired. But the Benton alternative made the bill all the more palatable to northern and western Democrats, and the House quickly concurred by a larger majority than the measure had commanded in its original form. On the last day of February, at sunset, both Houses had taken final action, and within twenty-four hours President Tyler affixed his approval. A hundred guns from the Capitol announced the success of Texas annexation; but many a bloodier salute was fired before that success proved substantial.

1844. March 1–3.

To glance for a moment at the meaning of this joint resolution. It not only consented to the erection of Texas into a State for admission into the Union with a republican form of government, but pledged the faith of the United States to permit new States to be formed from that jurisdiction not exceeding four, besides Texas, should Texas assent to it, and to admit these additional States into the Union hereafter with or without slavery, as the people of each State might prefer, if formed below the Missouri Compromise line of 36° 30′, but if formed above that line, without slavery at all. The tiger in the jungle of this fair territory was the adjustment of boundaries with Mexico; but we adopted Texas and her circumstances together, and dis-

tinctly assumed that difficult function. Any constitution formed by the people of Texas was to be laid before Congress for its final action by the first of January next. Such was the first and original branch of this joint resolution, embracing a consent under conditions given in advance, which the President might submit to the republic of Texas by way of an offer from the United States for immediate acceptance. But now, by force of the Benton alternative, the President might at his discretion negotiate with Texas clean terms of admission and submit the results hereafter.

Only three days were left to round out Tyler's official term. The second thought of Congress had apparently been to commit this whole business, with its dread responsibilities, to the incoming President, whose sober reticence was confided in. Polk had already pledged himself to "immediate reannexation," but this was a question of methods, and even Jacksonians disliked to give Tyler credit for anything. Benton and the Van Burenites had a last hope that the second alternative would be chosen, and, in fact, Benton afterwards asserted that Polk privately promised to choose it. But Tyler was too slippery, too intent upon the prize of his calling, to be stripped thus of his glory. He improved the last hours of his opportunity, and with Calhoun, it appears, to second him. The discretion given under the resolve he at once exercised himself; he chose the first alternative, which was what zealous annexationists wanted, and invited Texas to accept the conditions and enter without further transactions. Polk, perhaps, was willing to escape so easily the dilemma which the Democrats had arranged for him. He put upon this predecessor the odium of annexing Texas by the surest but most outrageous means, and Tyler, in return, put upon

Polk the odium of handling consequences so that war with Mexico followed. On Monday, the last day of his term, and the same day that he vacated the White House, Tyler took the responsibility without a qualm, by despatching a nephew, who spurred off with hot speed, bearing with him the official despatches which tendered to the lone star republic the proposal of the United States for immediate union.

John Tyler, as the reader will infer, had far more talent, as well as independence, than the Whigs had credited him with; and a disposition, moreover, which was hurtful enough when once astray, to occupy the full advantage of his strange opportunity. As a statesman and administrator he was much above the average, having industry, persistency, zeal to carry his point, and a light touch and fertility in resources which were worthy of nobler achievements. Like the immortal Virginians in whose galaxy he wished to be set, he was a thrifty and economical manager in affairs; he scrutinized closely the public expenditures, and held public agents to strict account.

Tyler's prime preserved to him a youthful aspect. He had a fresh complexion and an animated face, was fair and delicate to look upon, and a favorite with women. Tall and slender, standing six feet high, with silky brown hair which thinned out slowly, a high, retreating forehead, facile and expressive blue eyes, a prominent beak of Roman model, a small and firm-set mouth, and a delicate chin, he had an air about him of patrician polish and high breeding. He dressed well, and his plaited shirt-front was adorned with a costly pin. His general impression was graceful and pleas-

ing rather than strong; in his mien was something melodramatic, as though he either felt or exaggerated for effect beyond the common range of emotion. He was genial, and sometimes hilarious; prided himself much upon elegant hospitality and his skill in smoothing difficulties. He could entertain happily. He had a smile, a silvery voice, a flattering address; he seldom quarrelled openly, but could not be bent by force. Of gentle pedigree, he was best won by gentleness. The versatility of his politics has been shown in this narrative, and his eulogist observes that he had always the happy faculty of appearing conspicuous at the right moment on all the great national questions. The pendulum of his political morals vacillated between good and bad; and he pursued the game of politics with as keen a zest as Clay, though in qualities for leadership unworthy of comparison with the man against whom he measured himself. But if Tyler was but a sparrow for building up a national party, he could kill cock-robin, and Clay and Van Buren both fell pierced by his arrow. Tyler's keen relish of life gave him, in short, a strong hold upon it; and he never knew the pangs of poverty. His animal spirits were unfailing; his tears passed off like summer showers, and if he mourned the dead he loved the living best.

The apostate, however wise or amiable, fills a spotted page in history, for in the long run even fidelity to honest error wins more respect than levity as between error and truth. The most signal measures of his administration yielded him no lasting renown. Webster made the Ashburton treaty the excuse for lingering in his cabinet and received the honors of that arrangement; Calhoun, whose influence gained the ascendant, decked himself, and quite unfairly, with the

whole plumage of Texas annexation; even the glory of Tyler's bank vetoes was a negative one, based upon fallacious reasons and dimmed by dark reproach of duplicity. Whigs and Democrats together despoiled him of his fame after he had left office, so that Polk's memory was no sweeter than Clay's to the ex-President. His retirement was permanent until a last crucial test proved that his heart was with the South and not the Union. Wise, his wayward counsellor, has written kindly of him, as of the weaker vessel; but except for the praises of cabinet officers uttered while they were part of it, Tyler's administration was never eulogized except by himself while he lived and after his death by his own sons.

CHAPTER XVIII.

ADMINISTRATION OF JAMES KNOX POLK.

§ I. Period of Twenty-Ninth Congress. March 4, 1845-March 3, 1847.—§ II. The Mexican War. May, 1846-September, 1847.—§ III. Period of Thirtieth Congress. March 4, 1847-March 3, 1849.

JAMES K. POLK was not a man of soft and smirking, or even impartial phrases, but stern and resolute, having a sense of sole allegiance to the party which had elevated him to command. His mind was incapable of taking in the broader relations of things. What he went for he fetched; his platform was sacred as a creed, and opposition to that creed called for compulsion. Born in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, the oldest of ten children, and the son of a plain but sturdy farmer who removed to Tennessee early in this century and became one of the pioneers in the valley of the Cumberland, he grew up with that influential State, and, rising superior to his earlier opportunities, gained a fair classical education, after which he studied law, and, like so many of his fellow southerners, went from law into politics. He entered Congress when thirty years of age, a devoted Jacksonian. His Democracy came honestly, for his father had been one of Jefferson's strong admirers. Constancy to the star of Jackson's fortunes brought him his sure reward; and as Speaker and House leader under the administration of his illustrious fellow-citizen, he gained respect as a

safe partisan. He could pull and sweat in the party traces; and though no originator of measures, he defended them ably and was unwearied in the despatch of routine business. After fourteen years of such experience he had left the scenes of our capital to share the vicissitudes of State politics during Jackson's retirement. Here he was a governor, once elected and twice defeated; but his plain and consistent Democracy, his views on the Texas question, and Jackson's personal friendship withal, proved him the man that discordant elements might unite upon. And so, while seeking the secondary distinction of Vice-President, Polk had the first and greater bestowed upon him; and on the familiar steps of the capitol, after a six years' absence, he took the oath of office as his great patron had done before him.

A man of middle height, of plain and unassuming manners and conversation, with a grave and rather stern expression of countenance which was sometimes lit up by a pleasant smile, the new President inspired no awe, and there was nothing about him to recall the dignity and conscious force of the superb commander whose glory he reflected. But Polk understood well his place and what the Democrats expected of him. His Congressional training fitted him for despatching the public business, and his whole habit of thought made him diligent, systematic, faithful to his purpose, and concentrated upon carrying out the policy he had been the chosen instrument to accomplish. He heeded, moreover, all the rights, all the points, on his own side, as an even-paced lawyer will guard and fight for his client, who is not troubled with a discriminating perception of the rights of an adversary. Admirably fitted did he show himself as executor of a prearranged policy by

details, though he fell short, as events proved, of that ideality in statesmanship which seizes, controls, and harmonizes the great army of voters and leads to new fields and fresh conquests. Men about him who were capable of judging pronounced him one of the best of administrators, clear and persistent in his course, the master of his own cabinet, and not ruled by the ablest of his advisers. One trait which gave him this controlling advantage was his power of secrecy, which was so great that those whose official intercourse was closest with him were unable to trace the course of his thoughts. Polk, too, had respect for his place, and, unlike his predecessor, who was always defending, explaining, and equivocating, he shut his lips against his worst traducers. In private life he was pure and upright, honest as the day (for men will be thus scrupulous who are ready to take advantage in their official relations), a scorner of bribes, and rigid in his religious observances. His wife, an accomplished woman of the strictest Presbyterian faith, strained the etiquette of the White House to her standard of decorum. This married pair had no children and their domestic habits were simple.

Such was the "scourge of God," foreordained, as it might almost seem, to fulfil the ends of the new American spirit of territorial manifest destiny, and, reckless of all intervening rights, carry the flag of our republic across the Sabine and over the continent till it swept a broad area to the Pacific seas. No former President, perhaps, at the outset of his administration, ever had so clear and positive a perception of what he meant to do, and none ever despatched his ambitious programme more thoroughly. In a private conversation with one of his chosen cabinet, which is still preserved,

Polk announced his purpose soon after he had taken the oath of office. "There are four great measures," said he, with emphasis, striking his thigh forcibly as he spoke, "which are to be measures of my administration: one, a reduction of the tariff; another, the independent treasury; a third, the settlement of the Oregon boundary question; and, lastly, the acquisition of California." And history should record that Polk entered on his official duties with the immovable purpose of carrying every one of these measures into effect, and before his term had ended accomplished them all.

The Oregon settlement, mutually honorable and advantageous to Great Britain and the United States, was hastened by a strange climax of affairs, in which each negotiating party found itself too weak to take advantage of the other, while both were anxious to retreat from an embroilment. Polk's administration, as we shall soon see, had another war on its hands already; while Sir Robert Peel tottered under the obloquy of his corn-law repeal, that reform which served for his noblest public monument and his tomb. Of frozen Oregon the better part was ours, and the last milestone of the American Union was peacefully placed at the Pacific.

The pacifying temper of the Peel ministry through these Oregon troubles was due in some degree to the disposition shown by our new rulers on the tariff question. England's splendid peer, who fell from power because he dared leave his own rank to lift up the workingman, was intent, most of all, upon the free-

trade policy whose successful establishment has reversed British intercourse with the rest of mankind. The triumph of Cobden and cheap bread, under the Peel alliance, would throw open the queen's gates to our western granaries and admit the American farmer to an immense foreign market which hitherto had been barred against him. Fresh free-trade breezes swept through the Mississippi valley, welcomed this time by the vast food-producing region of the northwest, and not by southern staple-raisers alone, those pitiless foes of a protective tariff. A great trading and carrying interest by sea and land felt the light stir; for by what surer means could the export of American grain, breadstuffs, and staples be made to thrive than by inviting British commodities back in exchange by a scale of duties more favorable? Thus was the free-trade tendency, like the protective before it, a rule of expediency to be accommodated to the times, though in no sense to make a governing theory. Unlike Great Britain, ours was a country which contained in itself all the resources of independent existence; it was, moreover, a new country, with infantile industries which needed fostering for some time longer. The Emperor Napoleon, when asked if he would countenance free trade for France, is said to have responded: "We are fifty years behind England. Give me skill and experience; place me upon an equal footing; and I will try the experiment."

President Polk in his first annual message recommended a change in the tariff favorable to this new situation of affairs, and his Secretary of the Treasury reported to the same effect. Their argument assailed the tariff of 1842 as a discrimination against agriculture to swell the profits of the manufacturers, and they denounced the principle

1845. December.

of protection; they claimed that import duties should be adjusted to the necessities of the revenue. They took issue with the Whigs and with Webster on the assertion that a high tariff insured high wages to the workman and kept him employed; it was the mill-owner, they replied, and not his workman who took the extra profits. By such arguments the party in power prevailed, alluding as little as possible to the free-trade parallel in England; its opponents, on the other hand, trying to arouse prejudice by taunts of a British alliance.

Two points are observable in the rapid and important work of this Congressional session: first, that Texas, whose representatives cast their votes with the rest, was now a State in the Union; next, that the incorporation of that State had speedily involved the United States in a war with Mexico. The administration and its friends were courageous certainly, or venturesome, in adhering to their new tariff bill after the war had actually begun and more than ten millions had been appropriated for maintaining our arms. They believed, doubtless, that because the contest of republics was so unequal the stronger would easily prevail; but there is a strength in desperation to save one's native soil which may humble even conquerors. Money, they thought, would purchase peace, would purchase territory, by bribing at least the leaders of this poor people; but the leaders heeded the public voice, and the people, though their republic be misgoverned, are rarely craven enough to barter for gold their country's cause. Mexico, though torn with intestine quarrels like all the other Spanish-American coun-

1845-46.

tries to the south of us, preserved the spark of liberty and the remnant of her old Spanish pride. In fine, if we were to conquer Mexico, we must conquer her like Cortez. This mingled race of Aztecs and Aztec conquerors had too little cold prudence to purchase a pusillanimous peace. But, besides all this, the rapacity of our annexationists was already too great for any peaceful sacrifice to have saved Mexico from mutilation. Texas, indeed, was already torn from her; whether that province should go to the United States or remain independent had been the only practical issue these last four years; had that been the only prize, we might have borne it off in peace after all our perfidy. But "purposely," as President Tyler had stated it in his Texas treaty message, the boundary of Texas had been kept open for negotiation with Mexico. This meant that he adopted the fraud of the Texas revolutionists in voting to themselves the whole domain of Mexico to the Rio Grande, whereas the original and uniform southwestern boundary of the Texas province was admitted to be the river Nueces and its interior valley, an area sufficient to comprise all they had colonized. It meant still more than this, that the glut of our slaveholders would not be satiated without a new boundary line across the continent which would give them New Mexico and the long-coveted region of California. Polk's first hope was like his predecessor's, that California, so remote from the seat of the Mexican government, might be bought; that if our terminus was fated to advance, the terminus of our sister republic would accommodate and recede. But all such hopes were a delusion. The wolf seemed now our emblem, as of the splendid republic which Romulus founded; but Mexico was not the lamb dumb before her shearers.

Neither of these southern-bred Presidents felt that compunction for the rights of the weaker which makes just men hesitate.

The Mexican war was fought in a region where the new system of railway as also of telegraphic connection had found no development. By the time that war had fairly begun some twelve hundred miles of telegraph were in operation under Kendall's energetic operation; but its chief spread was northward from Washington into the populous Middle and Eastern States. War news was thus disseminated, but not official despatches between our capital and the seat of war. But as this Congress had the honor of establishing, after long delay, the Smithsonian Institution, in the interest of science, so had its predecessor accomplished something in the direction of increasing the popularity and usefulness of the post-office. Rowland Hill's reforms in England, and the new enterprise of the electric telegraph, which the United States was asked to buy out, but did not, lent a strong impulse in the direction of cheap postage. In place of the old letter rates graded from 6 to 25 cents for each piece of paper according to a table of graded distances, new rates nearly uniform were fixed by weight at 5 cents per half ounce for less than 300 miles, and 10 cents for longer distances. Private expresses had carried much mail matter, because of their responsibility and greater swiftness, but the new law monopolized the business for the United States on all mail routes; prepayment, too, being now required, here as abroad, postage-stamps came soon into use. With the era of the Mexican war the long and carefully-

1846. September.

written letter package, folded over and sealed, began to decline; while the Morse invention, though useless for our military and naval operations, was found at once of great benefit in aiding the arrest of fugitives, and affording to our busy merchants the latest price quotations and the latest foreign arrivals, and the latest intelligence, besides, which reached Washington from the far-off battle-fields.*

Two distinguished commanders of kindred politics, natives of America, born in the same illustrious mother State, and serving as soldiers under the same stars and stripes, could hardly have been more unlike in personal traits and military methods. Winfield Scott was the outranking officer, being already commander-in-chief of our army at the time when war was declared; and he has given himself full credit in his late memoirs for concurring in the detail of Taylor, a subordinate officer, to command at Corpus Christi when matters became critical with Mexico. Zachary Taylor was at that time a brigadier-general by brevet, but in lineal rank no more than a colonel. Entering at early manhood into the military service of the United States, among the regulars, he had won gradual renown as a brave, efficient, and trustworthy officer; and yet his record was by no means distinguished. Once he had sturdily repelled the Indian chief Tecumseh while in command of a frontier fort at the northwest; but that same war

1846–47.

* For important historical material contained in President Polk's diary and correspondence, which throw new light upon the Mexican war and Polk's administration, see this author's articles in Atlantic Monthly, August and September, 1895, which were republished in Historical Briefs, 121, 139.

of 1812 brought him no such conspicuous laurels as those of Chippewa and Lundy's Lane to the gallant Scott; while his long record in the ensuing years of peace showed nothing more memorable than sharing with others of our generals in the baffled pursuit of the Florida Seminoles. Yet of these two Virginians, so unequal in distinction when Texas entered the American Union, Taylor was somewhat the older, being at the outbreak of the Mexican war, in fact, full sixty-one years of age, though of sound health still, and a rugged constitution. Scott appreciated this, as well as Taylor's somewhat rigid disregard of forms. Accordingly, when detailing him to command on the Mexican frontier, the commander took care to provide him, unsolicited, with a staff officer of modest manners, his exact complement; for he knew Taylor (as he says) to be slow of thought, hesitating in speech, and unused to the pen. To this admirable combination of general and chief of staff he ascribes, with no little pique and very scant justice, the train of good military fortune which followed.

Taylor's bright star, brighter than his own while it lasted, was indeed one of the sorest tribulations to which our autocrat of the regular army had to school himself; for Winfield Scott, with all his noble and estimable traits, was of a vain and irritable disposition, such as could brook no rival; and unfortunately too he had been long in training for President. Scott aspired to be first in war and in peace besides. In military honors he well deserved supremacy; for he was prompt, far-reaching, and skilful, of consummate experience both in the bureau and field, thorough, fearless, and self-confident in fight, a master of the complicated details of moving and managing, as armies in

those days were moved and managed. He had, moreover, a wide range of acquaintance with our army officers of every rank, and with America's most eminent statesmen besides. But the jealousy and imperious temper of Scott's nature were fostered by long military habits in a high and even the highest grade. As he had quarrelled all the way up the line of promotion, with Generals Wilkinson and Gaines, with Andrew Jackson, with De Witt Clinton, with John Quincy Adams,—so while he remained of pre-eminent rank in this new war, except for the President himself, he continued to quarrel to his manifest disadvantage, being rarely in personal sympathy with the administration. He was of impatient spirit, arbitrary, overbearing; though not always without reasonable cause for vexation and irritability. All this placed Scott in strong contrast with Taylor, who was beloved by all who served under him, for unaffected simplicity and kindness of heart, and took little interest in political rivalries. Once made known to the country, the latter struck strongly the popular chord. Taylor's age won respect; and when advanced age was once perceived to be perfectly consistent with valor, strong judgment, and excellent sense, none who knew him or served under him could envy greatly his quick advance to illustrious honors. Scott himself was too generous-hearted not to accord to this veteran warrior, who had grown gray in the modest performance of duty, that true basis of a great character, pure, uncorrupted morals, combined with indomitable courage and a high purpose—at the same time that with envious ridicule he disparaged Taylor's moderate learning and converse with the social world, in comparison with his own, and deduced rigidity of ideas as the logical consequence.

But Taylor, if ignorant for one of his exalted rank in some respects, had that good gift of common sense and sagacity, and that sympathetic tenderness of heart, for which learning alone is no substitute. And hence of two able generals developed by the Mexican war, equally sincere and patriotic, the one built up formidable barriers to his own ambition, while the other, with scarce an obstacle in his path, attained the highest reward his countrymen could bestow, and when dying left behind no personal enemy in the world.

In personal appearance these warriors bore no resemblance. Taylor was of a moderate figure, inclining to corpulence. He had no manly beauty in his countenance; but his features, swarthy and weather-beaten, though homely in repose, would relax with a reassuring smile, which kindled from the eye and was wholly genuine; his whole aspect when animated was intelligent, benevolent, and full of good humor. But Scott towered in any crowd, distinguished by his handsome and leonine face and proud bearing; he was the very personification of an illustrious soldier. His pictures showed him as he preferred to sit for a portrait, wearing the full insignia of his exalted rank, suitable for parade, while those of Taylor arrayed him rather in fatigue cap and modest undress; for while the one loved pomp and ceremony, and relied upon plumes and epaulets to add to his impressive effect, the other dressed only for comfort, and had nothing of the coxcomb or martinet in his composition. He, in fact, was as incorrigible in simplicity as his superior officer was in parade; and the contrast of the two chieftains on this point afforded their junior officers much amusement. Taylor, so the story ran in camp, never put on full uniform but twice in the whole Mexican war,

both being unfortunate occasions—on one of which the flag officer of the naval squadron and he reversed their usual habits of dress to accommodate the prejudices of one another, and met for a prearranged interview with embarrassing apologies. On the field of action "Old Zack," as the soldiers liked to call him, rarely wore anything to indicate his rank, or even that he was an officer at all; all his men, however, knew him well. His retinue made no display. But Scott, whose sobriquet was "Fuss and Feathers," wore, from cockade to spur, the full regulation uniform, on all occasions of form, and expected to be honored by the army in return. At the seat of war, whenever he inspected his lines his intention was announced in advance, and he would appear punctually on the hour, mounted on his charger and splendidly dressed, with his staff officers equipped to correspond and riding behind him in their proper order—as many of them as he could spare for the occasion. The whole body of troops, with officers posted each in his proper place of rank, was drawn up to salute the chief as he rode by with his retinue, sitting erect and magnificent in his saddle, his superb figure set off by sword, gilt buttons, epaulets, and a black chapeau with waving feathers—a commander indeed, and almost a conqueror by the force of his imposing presence. Scott in repose bore no little resemblance to a lion or to some huge mastiff.

In battle, too, as may well be inferred, the methods of these heroes were quite different. Both were fearless; but Taylor's exposure of his person to danger, his courage in assuming oppressive responsibilities, was something wonderful. Where the iron hail fell thickest he would ride hither and thither, surveying the scene calmly and giving in person the needful orders;

or he would sit sidewise upon his horse, "Old Whitey," as though the animal were a sofa, so as to get a good range for his glass. Nervous volunteers and recruits who had never been under fire were inspired by the old man's presence, as he thus identified himself with his troops; for Taylor always looked upon the fight through his own eyes, using staff officers or dispensing with them as the turn of action might require. Scott, on the other hand, while exacting the most scrupulous respect and deference to himself, aimed constantly to give each officer in return who served under him the just allowance of duty and chance for distinguished gallantry according to his rank; and acting by rule he would move the whole machine forward with system and precision. He used more than Taylor did the eyes of his staff officers, and knowing his own importance, avoided personal exposure. Instead of giving orders on the spur of the moment, to meet the aspect of each fresh emergency, he prepared his plans deliberately and sent his written orders about, careful compositions, with an ostentatious pride that history should say that what he wrote down he accomplished. He had a literary style of his own in official reports, pungent, positive, and not without the marks of scholarship; while Taylor's dispatches were brief and pithy like a Spartan's, and, in spite of Scott's slurs, it is probable that he composed them. Taylor's methods, in a word, were unique and picturesque, fitted for striking some great blow and winning at odds a battle that would turn the scale, while Scott's comprehended the operations of a whole war. Scott, in fine, was looked up to and trusted with good reason; he had his kind side, but he ruled by force and discipline. He had, moreover, his blind side, for he was vain-glorious, fond of flattery, and jealous

outside of his profession; while Taylor's more amiable ambition and even his obstinate whims endeared him to all who served under him; he cared tenderly for his men as men, and they loved him tenderly in return.

Army nicknames do not compass the epitome of character, but they hit the nail somewhere; and so was it with the contrasting titles we have mentioned, "Rough and Ready," and "Fuss and Feathers." The point of each epithet was obvious, but of course it did the latter hero injustice, as with any other ruler who does not rule by sympathy. A young subaltern of this war, whose military star was at no late day to outshine these conspicuous luminaries by reason of exploits on a scale far more tremendous, has left in his own memoirs a just conception of the contrast these commanders presented in the field. His record may be trusted, for he served under both Scott and Taylor. "With their opposite characteristics," he writes, "both were great and successful soldiers; both were true, patriotic, and upright in all their dealings." *

By this time Scott's entrance into the Mexican capital had been bulletined, and it was felt that the sister republic lay prostrate at our feet and at our mercy. Webster, on the Senate floor, had already proposed that no territory should be annexed at all, his plea being that this Union was scarcely powerful enough or virtuous enough to bear the weight of the acquisition. Such a proposal, as events moved, was only more Quixotic than that of Clay's Lexington resolutions, which allowed a moderate annexation. The one great plan which fitted the

1847.

*1 U. S. Grant's Memoirs, 139.

political situation, that which gave the whole humane North and all opposers of this war common ground to unite upon, against the greed of slavery extension in which the war originated, was the Wilmot Proviso—the provision that all territory to be acquired from Mexico should be forever consecrated to freedom. This Wilmot Proviso was the one glorious idea engendered of the Twenty-ninth Congress. It offered to mediate between Whigs and the conscience Democrats. It proposed a sort of national penance and self-discipline for the sins already committed against a fellow-race and a neighboring republic. If adopted in season it must surely have stopped the wheels of war short of violent dismemberment. And not having been so adopted, it still offered the solid, the single political means of uniting the honest anti-slavery and anti-slave-propagating sentiment of the whole country, at the perilous crisis, upon legitimate and constitutional ground, most available and most essential to Congress. It was this practical adaptiveness to the times, whether the war stopped or whether it went on, whether acquisition or no acquisition resulted, that made the Wilmot Proviso flame in the skies like Constantine's cross, so instantly hailed with delight through the more populous range of the Union, though cursed by slave propagandists in the remote South.

Of this famous Wilmot Proviso, David Wilmot, rural Pennsylvanian and Democrat of the last and the next House, was unquestionably the author; or at least was author of an adaptation.* Not only did colleagues and contemporaries allow him whatever fame might accrue from giving to so important a proposal the pre-

*The language of the Wilmot Proviso closely follows the Ordinance of 1787, but adapts its language to the existing emergency.

fix of his name, but he lectured this year and spoke in various meetings and conventions of other States for the cause, where he was introduced as "author of the proviso." At one of these meetings, in New York State, he related how he had first suggested the idea in a dinner-table conversation, and upon the approval of two friends, submitted it to a larger council of Democrats, and then, with their united assent, proposed it to the House as a rider to the war appropriation bill. "There goes the proviso," gallery visitors at the Capitol would whisper in these days, while the House was in session, pointing to a stout Dutch-built man of moderate height, with light hair and eyes, smooth face and florid complexion, who moved among the desks, slightly conscious of attracting notice, with a pleasing countenance.

The Northern dissensions which the Mexican war bred in our Democracy, and the whole crafty policy of the administration, portended political disaster. Those dissensions widened rapidly under the wedge of the Wilmot Proviso; in New York State, more especially, where Marcy's influence was that of a "hunker" or "hard shell" (to apply the cant term of the day) and could not reconcile the "softs" or "barnburners" who inclined to anti-slavery views and the leadership of Silas Wright. Wright's death this year, after the failure to re-elect him governor, was a serious blow to Democrats of the latter class, and a calamity to all citizens, irrespective of party, who had resolved that a barrier must be opposed to the further usurpations of slavery. Polk's administration, which owed much to this man, had rendered him little; aware that his steadfast soul disapproved of its policy, and that the anti-slavery element of the country turned

to him for next President. "The Wilmot Proviso," wrote Horace Greeley in an obituary sketch, "owes more to Silas Wright than to any other man; he was the soul and centre of the influence that held so many of his party steadfast through the trials of last winter."

This was one of those epochs of popular revulsion when a high surge seems to sweep away from our Representatives' chamber the familiar set. Of 228 members in the present House, less than 100 had served in the one preceding, and the proportion of new members was very great; while from the West came several strangers of striking figure and physiognomy, all in the prime of early manhood.

1847. December.

One of these last was Abraham Lincoln, of Illinois, a Whig whom journalists likened to a lonely sycamore among the forest Democracy of his State. By a singular coincidence, two men, the antipodes of one another, and destined to a world-wide renown, entered this winter the opposite portals of the Capitol: both unconscious, no doubt, of the collision time had in store for them, and, for the present conjunction, hardly passing the salute of acquaintance. These two men were Lincoln and Jefferson Davis, born in the same slave State, the one of poor-white pedigree, the latter of patrician, and taken in tender years to opposite points of the compass. Lincoln had educated himself in the bitter school of privation, while Davis's training was a military one at the cost of the general government.

Two men more different in traits and physiognomy at the present time it would be hard to discover. Davis, of wiry and compact frame and medium height, combined the easy manners of a Southern gentleman whose

position was assured with the firm and erect carriage of a soldier, conscious of the distinction he had won in the late war, by individual gallantry and his marriage connection with General Taylor. Davis had served lately in the House, but, resigning his seat to lead a Mississippi regiment, he came back as a Senator to fill a vacancy, under the temporary appointment of the Governor, and was confirmed by the legislature of his State. His cast of mind was rigid and strongly Southern; cotton formed the staple of his political economy, and Calhoun was his ideal of a statesman. His heart was consecrated to expanding the area for slave States, and for that patriarchal system of labor as to whose eternal fitness he felt no doubt whatever. He was precocious in hardening into that tenacious, inflexible attachment to precepts, which in these waxen days of Northern sensibility won so many concessions for the sake of national harmony. As an instance of rigidity worthy a disciple of the South Carolinian, Davis had just declined a commission from the President, as brigadier-general of volunteers, on the ground that only a State could confer such a title; and the first impression he made this winter in Senatorial debate was as a martinet who praised regular troops above volunteers as soldiers, in words that intimated quite offensively that "the lower grades of men" were the better kind for such as himself to handle.

What, if he ever encountered him, this haughty scion of the Democracy thought of that gaunt, awkward, ill-dressed Whig of the other House, who was easy-humored and companionable, but shy of drawing-room receptions, we have no means of knowing. Had not Abraham Lincoln been pulled out of slave soil while his roots were tender he would have died unknown. But poverty in a free territory helped make a man of him.

This Congress saw the first and last of him in legislative life, however, for he declined to run another term, and his district reverted to the Democrats. Singular and striking in personal appearance, as those who met him in these years observed—not supposing that observation of much consequence—a kind but shrewd sagacity and droll humor were his salient traits. Above all, he imaged to the mind a steadfast honesty of purpose, and genuineness. In a single year he was pronounced a universal favorite among men who could appreciate whatever was rare, racy, and unique, and take a rough diamond upon its own intrinsic worth. Bad taste blurred the dignity of his efforts as a debater during this brief national episode, as when one enters the fashionable circle in a homespun suit. He showed himself clear-headed, a master of resources, nor did he fear to measure himself against statesmen of renown; but the flavor of the stump and village grocery detracted from one who trained with the party of gentility. In one speech of this session he dissected the President's partisan statement of the causes of the Mexican War, and, after a favorite process of logical reasoning, convicted Polk out of his own mouth. But in another he flung dignity to the winds, and in a sort of colloquial harangue on presidential candidates, he amused the House with humorous stories of hogs and oxen, and with bucolic illustrations, pointed and racy, but by no means elegant. Lincoln's quaint originality, in short, impressed his fellow-members more than the fibre of his statesmanship, which was fair and cautious; and had he been returned to another Congress it is possible he might have suffered, on becoming better known, that popular hindrance to high honors which more than one able American has lamented in his own

instance, by gaining the reputation of being comical. But Lincoln showed himself, even at this homelier stage of advancement, a logician of no mean power, whose conveyance of his ideas could be clear and picturesque, and as a political counsellor he was sage and practical.

A glory gilds the historical page for a moment. John Quincy Adams, at fourscore years, was a participant still in the debates of the House, though less actively than before, and rarely was he absent from his seat. As senior member he administered the oath to Speaker Winthrop, his colleague, when the House organized. The President's January message, which refused information to the House concerning the objects of the war and the instructions given for procuring a peace, brought the old man on his feet with a speech to which the whole hall listened, delivered with his earlier fire, but in a failing voice. Adams in these days won the respect of all parties and all sections by his consummate sturdiness of character. A reception which he gave that same month, where Clay was present, brought a more eager throng for salutations than at the White House. Never since the ex-President entered the House had the political tone of his native State been so nearly in accord with his own. Punctually on the 21st of February did Adams take his seat, as well to all appearances as usual. Rumors of peace and of the treaty which had just arrived stirred the air of the Capitol. The House was occupied upon a batch of trivial resolutions, and about one o'clock Speaker Winthrop had risen to put a question to vote, when a sudden cry was heard, "Mr. Adams is dying!" The venerable states- 1848.

man was falling over the left arm of his chair while his right arm reached out to grasp his desk for support. One member caught him in his arms, while others rushed from all parts of the hall to tender assistance. The House adjourned at once, and its dying member, helpless but hardly insensible, was borne upon a sofa into the rotunda, where he was quickly surrounded by members of both Houses, and strangers, the Senate by this time having also adjourned in great agitation. Upon medical advice the sofa was borne to the entrance door of the east portico, where the air was found too chilly, and then to the Speaker's room, whence the crowd was excluded. While lying here Adams partially recovered his speech and said in faltering accents: "This is the last of earth"—quickly adding the final words, "I am content." Through the day he lingered, all unconscious; through the next also, a national holiday, whose festivities prearranged were suspended in consequence; and in the early eve of the 23d, still in the Speaker's room, and close by the familiar post of duty, the great commoner breathed his last.

It was a remarkable death, worthy of a remarkable man, and quite resembling that of America's friend in revolutionary times, the Earl of Chatham. Adams's example thrilled his fellow-countrymen at last as though a final tableau of the heroic age had been taken with him. It was false to imagine that slaveholders honored most deeply in their hearts Northerners who were the most pliable to their wishes. Bitter, taunting, exasperating as this spokesman of a pilgrim constituency had so often been, they vied with orators of Adams's own section and vicinity in commemorating the varied talents, the vast learning and experience, the accumulated public honors, the spotless private character

and religious faith, and above all, the admirable courage and consistency which marked this career of more than fifty years, whose conspicuous merit was to make the humbler post of fame shine brighter than the highest.

Our government was at peace with all nations when Polk vacated the Presidency. In the midst of more momentous employments, the negotiation of treaties advantageous to American commerce had not been overlooked by him. The example of treating foreign countries liberally in our own ports elicited corresponding favors which argumentative diplomacy would have sought in vain. War and the rumors of war had now swept by; our administration which had come in as a lion went out as a lamb. The crown jewels which Polk's strong policy bequeathed to his country were of priceless worth—Oregon, and all that splendid spoliation of Mexico, whose chief of hidden treasures was California.

Polk's remarkable success as a negotiator and administrator in affairs was due less to skilful handling than to silence and secrecy. Reticence of purpose helped both to conceal a failure and to win from success an admiration unexpected. In methods he was pushing and persistent, aiming straight at his mark, but at the same time adroit and baffling, not to say deceitful, over the plans he most cherished. The Mexican people had good cause to reproach him with falsehood, while Dix and Wilmot are among those, once Polk's party friends, who have raised their own issues of veracity. Polk assuredly did not scruple to dissimulate as to his real intentions, and his repeated misstatements, official and unofficial, are scarcely palliated by that peculiar tem-

perament which made it impossible for him, even when exalted to the highest pinnacle of responsibility, to state a public question as though it had two sides to it. Even at the last moment and just as he was about to retire from public life, a peremptory call of the House compelled him to confess that he had caused the treaty of peace with Mexico to be ratified with a secret protocol, of which our Senate had never been apprised—a protocol which neutralized the effect of amendments our Senate had made to the original treaty.

The strong traits of Polk's administration have already been outlined. It was unquestionably an administration of strong achievements; and all doubts may be dismissed concerning the efficiency of the man who was at the head of it. Bancroft's testimony as a cabinet officer is confirmed by that of Buchanan, who, spontaneously and in private, held Polk up in later years as a model President in various respects; as one who maintained influence among his counsellors by his great reticence, his disposition to keep himself uncommitted on important points of policy until the time should arrive, and his determination not to have the chieftains of embittered factions with rival ambitions about him, but to keep all working steadily for the glory and success of his administration. He ascribed Polk's success in public measures, more than anything else, to his regard for the vital principle of official unity in action. And this premier has recalled another trait in Polk's management of affairs which he of all advisers was the proper one to discern; all important questions with foreign nations were drawn to himself as far as possible, so

that they should be settled at our capital and under his immediate supervision. Though Mexico was necessarily an exception to such a course of dealing, it was characteristic of a negotiator like this to send to the seat of war a clerk of the Secretary of State with a treaty already drafted under his personal direction as the basis of a settlement. Polk, in fine, had limitations as a statesman, and greater ones as a political manager; but experience had given him confidence in affairs. He had never shirked hard work, and in his own way he faithfully served the people. He was not fastidious; he was not thoughtful of the rights of other peoples, other races, other political parties, than his own. He saw what he wanted, and he toiled with unwearied zeal to fetch it. His motto for Americans and white men was to keep what they had and catch what they could; and upon that theory of public achievement he brought things to pass. Ideality and the highest sense of honor were wanting to such a policy; and while our people accepted his benefits they had too much good feeling to commend his craft or reward him with their gratitude.

The heavy burden of official cares and that heavier burden of popular obloquy which this lesser son of Tennessee sustained in silence were more than his health could well endure in the later prime of a life which had been loaded down with public activities. Polk had no humorous perception, no elasticity of spirits. His wife, an exemplary woman, was too devout for social levities, and their marriage was childless. That old and sorrowful look which many former acquaintances commented upon when he journeyed North was visible at Adams's funeral and on the few other occasions of this latest winter when the President appeared in public. His silvery hair, combed to the back of his head, gave

to a face of serious demeanor an almost venerable look. After the inauguration of his successor on the 5th of March, he made a short tour southward in company with ex-Secretary Walker, and in due time reached Nashville and his home. His serious illness there was announced shortly after, and next his death.

1849. June 15. No public obsequies were arranged in his honor. The opposition press, which had execrated him as he left the capital, spoke more gently of him in his secluded grave—of the quiet, unostentatious life he had lived; of his strictness and devoutness as a member of the Presbyterian Church; of his freedom from the Southern vice of duelling, and from dissipation in all its forms; of his irreproachable character in private, and finally, as a public man, of his long and distinguished services to the country. After this brief-spaced decent tribute Polk's name was seldom publicly mentioned. Over the fruits, sweet and bitter, which his administration had cast so abundantly into the lap of the people, there sprang up very soon sectional quarrel and contention, but the gatherer of those fruits was very soon forgotten.

CHAPTER XIX.

ADMINISTRATION OF ZACHARY TAYLOR.

Period of Thirty-first Congress. March 4, 1849-July 9, 1850.

THE Deity that overrules all things punishes the sin of covetousness, not necessarily by withholding or depriving of the coveted object, but by planting in the wrongful acquisition a penalty. The men or the people who yield to inordinate desires are permitted to be further corrupted by gaining what they strive for. Texas, New Mexico, California, all that vast sweep of territory which we had wrested from Mexico by fraud or conquest, was ours irrevocably, and perhaps forever. We peopled that glorious area with our own inhabitants; we gave it the blessing of a better civilization; under our influence and protection the wilderness blossomed. Time, in fine, has welded that whole annexation so firmly and indissolubly with the great American Union, that the earlier misrule of Mexico is almost forgotten. In one sense it was better for society that the acquisition was made. The scorching illustrations, drawn in Corwin's famous speech from Napoleon and modern Europe, have found here no parallel; in American history no infatuated warrior has bent the Republic to his personal ambition; our boundaries have not expanded like those of France to shrink back once more to their original limits. Yet divine retribution followed as quickly as

that speech predicted, and the delusion of "manifest destiny" brought its appropriate punishment. That the iniquitous war with Mexico drove from public confidence the politicians and the political set by whom it was provoked, our last chapter has shown. Triumphant success to our arms did not turn the torrent of popular odium which the prosecution of such a war excited. That, to be sure, was temporary, and while the first sense of guilty wrong lasted after the secret motives of the war had been fully revealed. A wider retribution followed, as the scroll of divine requital slowly unrolled. In less than five years North and South were nearly in civil conflict to settle the social status of these new territories; in five years more the rivalry, still further strengthened, was transferred to other territory and other new projects for slave conquest; another five years saw civil disruption and a civil war such as the world had never witnessed; and before twenty years had elapsed slavery and slave confederacy had melted alike in the fervent heat of a strife which began in this unhallowed attempt to wrest the domains of a weaker republic for the spread and perpetuation of slave institutions in the stronger. Freedom was the final result and the only one consonant with eternal justice; but that goal was not reached without terrible cost and sacrifice to both North and South, for men of each section had erred exceedingly.

But truly this new acquisition was a noble one, could we but have gained honorably that rich and picturesque domain. With Texas, California, Utah, and New Mexico, that broad zone was now complete which girdled the continent from ocean to ocean. This proud and independent republic, within sixty years of that compact existence which began with the Mississippi for

a last border, had crossed that broad river and stretched its empire to the remote and undefined peaks of the Rocky Mountain chain, and at length, sweeping beyond that mountain barrier, stretched in its last and fullest expansion to the Pacific. The two great seas of the world now washed the one and the other shore; and a great orator's imagery recalled the artist's last finish to the shield of Achilles, when he poured round the waves of living silver which "beat the buckler's verge and bound the whole."

There were signs and portents in these days which augurs of the old Roman world would have collated. Zachary Taylor took the oath of office under a gloomy sky, while a raw wind blew from the east and intermittent snowflakes were falling. Bloody war, with Hungary's vain struggle for independence, agitated eastern Europe. Riot and incendiary fire attended Tory outbreaks over the Canadian line, in the course of which the buildings of a provincial parliament were burned. Late in the spring, within our national borders a great crevasse and river flood made much distress about New Orleans city and the lower Mississippi; and soon afterwards from that same unwholesome region stalked forth the black plague of cholera to ravage the Union far and wide in course of the summer, and reap its victims in all directions so remorselessly that a day of national fast and prayer was proclaimed to avert so terrible a scourge. 1849.

But startling beyond all other portents was that pioneer band moving westward through the Rocky wilderness, upon whose flank hovered that same cholera pestilence, breathing its rotten breath, but powerless to

pursue far; and those ocean Argonauts, besides, whose faces were set to the same remote land of the golden fleece. For gold was the new and startling discovery in California. The North did not alone watch this portent. Southerners, less identified with the movement, slaveholders of the Gulf, observed it with undisguised dread and dismay. And when presently it was revealed that a new free State was forming which would cover the best breadth of that whole Pacific slope, conquered most of all by Southern arms in the interest of Southern expansion, Southern men realized that Nature had turned the tables upon them—that the fruits of our Mexican conquest were ripening for those who opposed rather than for those who incited it. To free California, what was slavery's sure counterpoise? The old equilibrium of sections was destroyed; freedom overbalanced the scales of national influence; and at no distant day the system which they had pressed to extend would be at the mercy of a numerical majority whose inner wish was to eradicate it. True, there remained the bulwark of the constitution to resist encroachments upon the institution in States where it already existed. But to remain local and sectional, and not to propagate and justify their own peculiar heritage, against the world's philanthropy, was the very root of bitterness to this haughty and high-strung race of proprietors, who hardly believed that freedom, once gaining the upper hand, would respect the restraints of the constitution. "For the first time in the history of our country," writes a Southern governor impetuously, "the North is dominant in the federal government."

It was startling to see Southern Whigs of the Gulf States join in that jealous hue and cry—men like Alexander H. Stephens, who but a few weeks since had

resisted Calhoun's artful efforts to unite all the slaveholders of Congress in a bold menace of disunion; or like Toombs, who had confessed so confidentially that California could never be a slave country, and that in organizing the territories Southerners had only the point of honor to serve. Such men feared, perhaps, that the home sentiment would ebb away from them if they pleaded still for loyalty. The honor of a gentleman had but one code—to maintain one's point, not to discuss its righteousness. Slavery was a training-school of rebellious temper, of impatience to force extremities.

The Union will soon dissolve (thus argued the Southern Whig); we have ultimately to submit or fight; the anti-slavery feeling and the feeling of dismemberment may be abated, but it will return with increased force. "It is the idea of the age, the monomania of the century in which we live." * And slaveholders who, like Stephens, saw in political dissolution a resistless fate, apprehended that when the Congressional majority in House and Senate was once footed up against the South, the North would harass, annoy, and oppress.

The third great speech of March, 1850, was by Seward. It upheld the President's course, and pleaded for the admission of California under her free State constitution, without extraneous conditions. The young Senator from New York was already looked upon as the Mordecai in the king's gate; and Southern men blamed the President, one of themselves, for being under such influence. To

1850.

*Johnston's A. H. Stephens, c. 24.

this new champion of the forum listened all of the triumvirate, Clay, Webster and Calhoun, gazing silently while he spoke of things strange to them. He seemed really younger than he was; a man slightly built and agile, clad in plain black; his reddish hair turning brown, but not yet mingled with gray; his compact head and curving features marked strongest in the profile. Trying, indeed, must it have been for Seward, on his first national occasion, to face potentates so famous, and yet so distrustful of him. When he first arose he spoke with hesitation, as though his heart failed him, and he seemed commonplace by comparison; but the substance of his speech was striking, and his plain features soon lighted up, until the warmth of his eloquence stirred the whole chamber. He urged broad moral principle, as one who thought the old equilibrium of the sections should never be restored. He condemned all political compromises which involved matters of the conscience; and confidently presaged the power of the American people to maintain their national integrity under whatever menace of danger. This was the speech, long commented upon, which announced the "higher law" doctrine—that higher law to which all human legislation should conform.

Of all these famous Senatorial speeches, Seward's was by far the most profound, and worthiest of being read in a calmer age. It was full of thought and humanity, and lighted up with prophetic insight. But Calhoun, most of the Olympian trio, was galled by it. The dying statesman had glided in like a spectre on the day that Webster spoke, and taken part in a brief colloquy at the close of its magnificent peroration. More than once did he return, and when Seward spoke he sat riveted, with glassy eyeballs fixed intently upon him.

And muttering what sounded like a malediction, he said to friends about him that one with such ideas of "higher law" was not the kind of man to associate with; and in that repelling mood, so fame reports, he left the accustomed chamber never to return. Calhoun died on the last day of March, a confirmed disunionist. And on his dying bed he told Toombs that he must leave to younger men the task of carrying out his plans.*

Had Webster and Clay—or had either one of them—stood by their President, history might have vindicated a policy against which rebellion had no just cause for appeal. Sooner or later California's admission as a free State must have been granted if she was to remain a national prize at all, and in all other respects—except the boundary issue with Texas—this territorial question might have been adjourned for twenty years. Without positive action at all by Congress the responsibility rested upon Presidential shoulders, and there the people would have trusted it. But the Senatorial drift was to Clay's plan of compromise.

Zachary Taylor was the first of American Presidents whose choice rested solely upon a military reputation disconnected altogether from civil pursuits. And the only errors of his administration—which, after all, were unimportant—should be ascribed to his inexperience in public affairs and his unacquaintance with public men; time would have corrected them had he lived to round out his term. His

* 1 Coleman's Crittenden, 363. "He was firmly and I believe honestly persuaded," wrote a friend soon after the funeral, "that the Union ought to be dissolved." Ib.

cabinet was not all it should have been, and while he was on the point of changing it death intervened, and the regret remains that he had not changed it before. In the higher aims of domestic, as well as foreign policy, he showed the best qualities of an administrator; being wise, temperate, sincere, honest as the day, more than loyal to the Union, because he loved it and would have laid down his life in its defence. He was simple in habits, frank in manners, with a genuineness which impressed all who came in contact with him, and a firmness that shunned no danger. Though not by genius or habit a statesman, he saw more clearly the bold headlands of national policy through the mists that were gathering, than the wisest and world-renowned of our statesmen who scarcely condescended to him and thought their vision better. Nor did it take him many months to discern that what the country wished and needed was not pacification nor the plausible bargain of principles, but loyal acquiescence in nature and the right. A slaveholder himself, he yet felt that slavery ought not to extend farther. A soldier of the Union, he stood ready to lead the Union forces in his own person if his own section rebelled, and to pour out his blood in defence of the flag.

Personal example is, after all, the greatest force which can elevate or degrade a government; and the best of personal examples is that of honest patriotism striving to be right. Taylor, while he lived, inspired firmness for freedom's cause, and he was the one man before whom the false idealists of a slave confederacy quailed with fear. Naturally, then, he endeared himself to the common people, and had he lived there is little doubt that he would have carried the policy he had at heart. It was the most practical; it depended

the least upon assertion by Congress. But the key of the territorial situation was lost with the warrior who grasped it. The saying had long been current, "General Taylor never surrenders;" and his first surrender was to death. His last appearance in life was fitly on the anniversary of his country's independence. His last official act was to proclaim a new compact with Great Britain. That grim conqueror, who had never checked his military renown, forbade him the proof of statesmanship, and his monument must remain an unfinished shaft.

CHAPTER XX.

ADMINISTRATION OF MILLARD FILLMORE.

§ I. Period of Thirty-first Congress. July 9, 1850-March 3, 1851.—§ II. Period of Thirty-second Congress. March 4, 1851-March 3, 1853.

ROLL back the inevitable tide for ten years and we may estimate the effect of Taylor's untimely death upon American politics. The man was gone on whom freedom's cause depended; there was no leader of the people left but Congress, and Congress was not likely to resist long its orators. And now for a space the marble-propped cham-

1850. ber vibrates with funeral eloquence—with silvery eulogies, breathing all kindness, as the virtues of the dead are recounted, yet all the while hinting delicately that the orator himself would have made the better President for times so turbulent. "There were circumstances in his death," said Webster, mysteriously, in deep and solemn tones, "so favorable for his own fame and character, so gratifying to all to whom he was most dear, that he may be said to have died fortunately." Clay, later, paid his tribute to the departed as "an honest man and a brave man;" but while praising him for his conduct of foreign affairs, he spoke with reserve upon his domestic administration.

A second time had the Whigs chosen a President, to

be baffled by the all-destroyer. But no apostate succession was to be their present misfortune. Millard Fillmore was a genuine Whig as well as a wise, upright, and incorruptible statesman. His experience with public affairs, and his knowledge of public men, were far more extensive than Taylor had brought to the chief magistracy. He loved the Union and was devoted to its welfare. And besides all this, his inner convictions were anti-slavery; he had been nursed and brought up in that quarter of an agitating State where agitation rocked hardest. For all this, Fillmore's training, his temperament, was that of a civilian, not bold, but prudent. His disposition was conservative; he could not create; he was one who at all times would rather make terms than face an enemy. And more than this he appreciated the immense difference in popular strength between an elected President and an accidental one—between an Executive who could face slaveholders as one of their own class, and an Executive against whom slavery would fork its tongue as an intruder. Men who dared not more than to threaten the one, would have opposed, perhaps impeached, thwarted in every way, the other. Fillmore, then, was easily swayed by Webster, Clay, and all the temporizing influences of the Whig party. Nor should we fail to recall Fillmore's long strife with Seward for predominance in their common State and neighborhood. With his lurking jealousy of the rival who had diverted a share of local patronage and outstripped him so quickly in favor at the White House, there is little doubt that during the splendid debate to which he was a silent listener, the man who presided over the Senate had been drifting, almost unconsciously, into the current of time-serving truce. So true is it that under our system

the Vice-President inclines to become an attractor of counter-influences within the party.

The North had humiliations and struggles of its own with reference to this new and immutable compact of Congress. Nor took it long to discern that the new fugitive slave act, which Southern Unionists seemed to think the golden link of loyalty, was, from the opposite standpoint, the most damnable in the chain. It was not, perhaps, the weakest; for that, in more remote consequences, was the new principle now grafted upon the territories, whereby Congress, not content to omit quietly the Wilmot Proviso, expressly abnegated its rights of guardianship and left freedom and slavery to antagonize to the end. The mischief of that new principle was not apparent for years, but that of the fugitive slave act was palpable at once.

It is but just to our slaveholding brethren to admit that they seldom, if ever, invoked the machinery of this obnoxious law for fraudulent enslavement. Collision came rather at the point where free soil would have shielded the long resident as a free citizen, despite some claim of former bondage. The fugitive slave act to all but slave States was detestable, and it forced the general government to use a giant's strength like a giant. The task of quenching agitation on the slavery question was formidable enough for any administration; but to quench it while pouring oil on the flames was a task herculean. Yet Fillmore and his cabinet did not shrink from it. In the division of Northern Whigs which now ensued, radicals found themselves coalescing more closely. Large public meetings called in favor of Union, and the "peace measures," at Boston, New

York, Philadelphia, Nashville, Cincinnati, and elsewhere, widened the breach irrevocably. Notable citizens took the lead in reconciling the North to the new compact—men like Rufus Choate, John Sergeant, and Richard Rush. Old line Whigs and Democrats for the time approached one another; conservatives joined hands to put down the radicals. Letters from Webster, Clay, Cass, and Woodbury were read promiscuously at such gatherings; and men of historical lineage were sought out to preside, from Bunker Hill to the Hermitage. No union possible without forbearance—this was the burden of their appeal. Crittenden, the Attorney-General, prepared an opinion that the fugitive slave act was constitutional. Webster contended strenuously that, though not perfect, nor such as he would have framed, it was a law of the land and ought not even to be amended. "No man," he wrote to one of these gatherings, with a fling at Seward, "is at liberty to set up, or to affect to set up, his own conscience as above the law."

The sober second thought of the people at length sustained President Fillmore in his purpose to uphold the peace settlement of 1850 as a final and comprehensive one. His lack of personal pre- 1852.
tence, his clear and emphatic expression, gave force to his approval of the legislative policy, obnoxious though the latter might be to a large minority of both sections. Republics incline to temporize with problems which are found difficult to manage, and temporizing is the essence of all government which is carried on by popular assemblies. Few turned back the page far enough to read the fate of Clay's tariff compromise

of 1833, so prone are American citizens to treat the present on its detached merits. Few measured the danger of granting half that a State demands upon its open threat of disloyalty. Few calculated the probable duration of a settlement based upon the idea that the Union had ceased to expand, and that sectional pride would not resist the edicts of nature nor stretch the national boundaries. This fact, at least, was positive: that the whole course of events was soon reactionary under the impulse of the new compact. The country grew sick of the slavery question and wished agitators at the devil. Good men, North and South, made the constitution their fetich more than ever, and, like a prudent husband who is yoked with an irritable spouse, they forced themselves to love for the sake of quiet.

In view of their practical concurrence, after much tribulation, upon the vexed problem of the day—and since both acquiesced in the sectional pacification of 1850, though the National Whigs were, in sentiment, hopelessly divided by it—wherein, after all, consisted now the fundamental difference between Whig and Democrat? What issue was there left between these parties upon which to conduct the present campaign? Little, we may rest assured. The intelligence and discriminating justice of the American people were flattered by both platforms; the limited scope, too, of the general government, and the reserved rights of States. But while the Whigs called still for encouragement under the tariff to American industry, for the liberal improvement of rivers and harbors, Democrats rebuked the fostering of one branch of industry to the

detriment of another, and the raising of more revenue than the necessities of the government required. Nearly, then, as national parties seemed to approach one another, and devoted as both might be deemed to the idea that the people were the fountain of sovereign power, there appeared this radical diversity of sentiment concerning the appropriate sphere of government, that the Whigs looked rather to a superintending and beneficent authority, which should alleviate burdens and multiply the blessings of general intercourse, while Democrats nourished a general distrust and jealousy of all guiding authority, all patronage, and held that national government the best which governed the least. But this "let alone" had come to be a peculiarly Southern phase of national politics; it harmonized with the bald and slothful development of these staple-raising States, and tended above all things to place State rights foremost. The slave oligarchy, compact and fearless, gained in these years the upper hand in the Democratic party, by giving the chief honors and patronage to Northern men who could carry the populous States, while shaping the national policy to its own ends.

The Whig cause was overcast and funereal from the start. In scarce a week from the close of their discordant convention, died Henry Clay, the founder and inspiration of that great party, prince of the Senate (to use a title of the Augustan age), and beyond whatever faults of character, a plastic moulder of national policy, an orator rich and ready, and a sympathetic leader of intelligent men, such as the world has rarely seen. The funeral

1852. June 29.

escort which bore home his remains from the capital city where his last sunshine lingered made the opening procession of this Whig canvass; while a darker departure marked its close—the death of that other leader in whom the party originated.

Daniel Webster had been in failing health, oppressed with years and the cares of office, and buoyed up chiefly by the hope of attaining the reward of his long-cherished ambition. His defeat at the Whig convention—a last defeat as he too well knew—was more than his proud spirit could bear; moreover, its circumstances, doubly mortifying from the defection of those he had served not less than of those he had deserted. He had bargained away his moral conviction for the sake of national harmony; had parted precious and life-long friendships for the sake of pacifying the slave-masters; and now these turned their backs upon him after using him for their own ends. They preferred the commonplace Fillmore, over whose administration he had poured his full resplendence. Clay, of all allies, had passed his dying word for that preference; Crittenden's cabinet influence had gone in the same direction; Fillmore, not magnanimous enough to stand aside, had consented. Webster felt that he had dragooned New England in vain. He was stunned, bewildered, unable to carry on his public tasks at the usual place or with the customary composure. To some of the Southern delegates returning home he betrayed the poignancy of his chagrin over their defection. He sought the refuge of his lonely home near the resounding surf, there to lay himself down to die, with only nature and unchanging personal friends for his company. Some of these last would have put him before the people as an independent candidate. In the anger of his own

grief he spurned Scott more disloyally than he had done Taylor; for he privately advised his friends to vote for Franklin Pierce. He seemed willing that the Whig party should be cast into the same grave with his disappointed hopes. And thus dismissing the world with its vain strifes, Webster breathed his last while the political battle raged fiercely in the distance; and the life of our most intellectual statesman, the man of heaviest brain and most kingly aspect, ebbed out with the neighboring tide. Nothing that he uttered in his last hours indicates that what he had done for fraternal peace, that the success of those compromise measures which at length seemed positive, brought him consoling thoughts, serene tranquillity at the last. Whether he closed his eyes in the full conviction that he had done right only eternity can reveal. October 23.

Webster died the victim of personal disappointment. He still lives in American memory, and deserves to live, as statesman, orator, and exemplar of the national sentiment, as champion of the Union against all disloyal heresy. Yet his image and memory are likely to endure in generations to come, as the image and memory of one who, with all his colossal endowments, was very human. Nature was always stronger with him than the arts of discipline; and this Achilles of our civil life, dipped early into the Styx of national politics, had yet his vulnerable part.

These deaths of illustrious leaders—and particularly the latter and less expected one—cast a pall over the Whig canvass, presaging disastrous defeat. Under the greatest American soldier of the age, albeit a sad miscalculator in politics, the Whig party—or that remnant which remained faithful to regular nominees

—marched to a Waterloo defeat. Franklin Pierce, the fainting hero, overwhelmed the proud conqueror of the Montezumas. The first Tuesday's sun of November went down upon a shattered and discomfited national party never more to rally, but destined to disperse in local fragments, and then melt into the yeasty waves as completely as Federalism before it. Whiggery, it is true, had been less patrician, less distrustful of the people than Federalism; but the Federalists in their day accomplished much for history that was permanent, while the Whigs—crushed under the incessant weight of unparalleled misfortunes—left nothing. The drift of American politics, in spite of the best navigators, had been to sectional strife; and for guidance through such dangers, the Whigs had proved too humane to steer in the one direction and too faint-hearted to take the other. The party fell by dissension and by its terrible propensity to misfortunes; and its epitaph must be that it loved the Union as it was and sought sincerely to preserve it.

November 2.

Millard Fillmore left supreme office with this wide-ranged Union flourishing and to all appearances tranquil. At home, as he could fairly claim, Americans enjoyed an amount of happiness, public and private, such as probably had never fallen to the lot of another people—of happiness, in which great multitudes, unlike all precedents from the Old World, felt the right to participate. In closing his Presidential term, he claimed to have done no more than to discharge its duties to the best of his humble abilities and with a single eye to the public good. It would be invidious to deny to one called so suddenly

1853. March.

and so unexpectedly to terrible responsibilities so modest a meed of public gratitude. Congress, though not in political sympathy with him, rendered perfunctory homage. In official utterances he had thrice blessed already the compromise of 1850 as the final reconcilement of slavery and freedom. Benedictions flowed down this last of ruling Whigs, like the oil on Aaron's beard and skirts, as he stepped back to the grade of private citizen. In the hour of parting salutation, the members of his cabinet, dignified and able men, certified in writing to his uniform courtesy, and their high appreciation of his services and personal character. Could bland appreciation of this kind fix Fillmore's seat among the permanent benefactors of mankind? His administration had been instrumental to the allied purposes of that noble pair, Clay and Webster, who, in their lives, made Presidents, though they were none. He himself originated in office nothing that was accomplished, and accomplished nothing but what others originated. Fillmore's personal followers were not among the boldest, the soundest, the clearest sighted of the free States, but rather among the timid and obsequious. Such friends he preferred in the patronage, and was chieftain of the "silver grays." This handsome personage, whose deportment was excellent and upon whom so many looked for the next few years as the surviving associate of buried giants and the last type of Washingtonian politics, law, order, and high respectability, saw actually into the national situation about as far as one might hold out his hand before his eyes; and by that same length of measurement must be bounded his permanent fame.

CHAPTER XXI.

ADMINISTRATION OF FRANKLIN PIERCE.

§ I. Period of Thirty-third Congress. March 4, 1853-March 3, 1855.—§ II. Period of Thirty-fourth Congress. March 4, 1855-March 3, 1857.

WHEN the new year opened and Congress reassembled after the holidays, Franklin Pierce stood strong in the general confidence of the people of both sections. Swept into the Presidency as he had been by a great popular uprising, men of all parties who knew nothing of his personal fitness or antecedents had rallied to his support with zeal and even with enthusiasm.

1854.

Juvenile in appearance, with a tinge of sadness occasioned by domestic sorrow, finely bearing himself hitherto on all public occasions, most statesmen looked upon him as one who would lead the people into new and green pastures of peace and conciliation. The conditions under which he began were certainly favorable to such hopes; for the Whigs were now dismembered and destroyed, and he stood the chosen leader of an overwhelming majority. But it is a foible of every democracy to make pets of the plausible and untried, and in its susceptible mood to invest its favorite with virtues and talents which he never possessed; for the public is like an ardent lover, and looks through a highly refracting medium.

Why were our Northern people so easily self-deceived? Why had they not perceived that political signs already pointed to pleasing the South beyond measure? Southern expansion, however, was a slow and uncertain project, and a more immediate benefaction of slave territory was in order from the sycophantic politicians. In the Kansas-Nebraska bill leaps forward the swift generator of new national discontent, new parties. Its originator was Stephen A. Douglas, ambitious, forceful, and subservient; he had put his shoulder to the wheel of tropical annexation, a team which slavery drove; but now he mounted his own chariot. The bell of opportunity strikes, and the fog now lifting shows the great pacification of 1850, no longer the land's end of strife, as the charts had described it, but the rounding-point into a vast and illimitable jungle of sectional controversy, where tigers roar and scorpions stiffen to attack.

The Senate was the scene of this agitating discovery. Here, without warning or suggestion, and as though selfish for the sole paternity of his scheme, Douglas, as chairman of the committee of territories, reported on the 4th of January a bill for the territorial government of Nebraska, a region embraced under the old Louisiana purchase, and apportioned to freedom by the famous Missouri Compromise act of 1820. One of the sections of this bill, copying the language used under the late compact of 1850 with reference to Utah and New Mexico, provided that whenever Nebraska should be admitted into the Union as a State or States, it should come in "with or without slavery," as its constitution at the time of admission might prescribe. "A proper sense of patriotic duty," explained Douglas, "enjoins the propriety and necessity of a strict adher-

ence to the principles, and even a literal adoption of the enactments, of the adjustment of 1850."

Four years had passed since the consummation of fraternal unison, when the Wilmot Proviso, that provocative of intestine strife, was laid under the vaults of the Capitol. And now was renewed the moral agitation, which had been soothed to rest with so much difficulty, in deadly and terrible earnest. No act of pretended grace was ever engrossed upon our government parchment so utterly uncalled for, and at the same time so despicable and so thoroughly subversive in the end of all that its originators professed to accomplish by it. That it was uncalled for, and in its concession to slavery equally a surprise to North and South, no one ever had the hardihood to dispute; and the tone of the President's December message is proof at least that no such upheaval of internal policy was then contemplated. The organization of Nebraska territory had been pending earlier, and bills previously introduced were of the usual form and purport; not a single petition from the people of either section prayed Congress to repeal the Missouri settlement, or to organize this interior territory upon any other basis than the basis of that settlement which, for more than thirty years, had been peacefully acquiesced in. The despicableness of this new scheme was two-fold: it made freedom and slavery coequal from the national point of view, and it abrogated a solemn compact. That it subverted its own ends will appear as this narrative continues.

What possible motive, then, founded in a deep sense of public honor and responsibility, could have induced Northern statesmen, like Douglas and Franklin Pierce,

to come forward with this boon which its recipients had never asked? Nothing deeper, we may feel assured, than sycophancy to the slave power, and the ambition which hoped to thrive by it. We had heard before of Northern statesmen, the representatives of free soil and a free constituency, who bowed and bent to that yoke, who yielded under pressure; but Douglas was the first of freedom's children who ran to throw open the gate to barbarism. America may smile now at the pathos and grandiloquence which invoked, in the name of justice, equal privilege and popular sovereignty, the right of one class of human beings to hold another class, of different color, enthralled like dumb cattle. Of constitutional argument against the Missouri Compromise the courts were soon to give enough, for what our fundamentals of Union leave undefined, robed dignitaries will define by their own politics; and, if slavery infected one limb of the government, it spread easily to another. But of that argument, as yet, the political leaders were timorous. Douglas would gladly have rested on his first base, and given to the Missouri Compromise a tacit quietus. Jefferson Davis, too, was hampered by the recollection that the extension of that compromise line to the Pacific had been his platform in 1850. The Missouri compact, if not an ideal one, had given to freedom a share, at least, of the inheritance; it established good within certain confines, like that first of territorial compromises, the Ordinance of 1787, which, had it passed as Jefferson originally framed it, would have presently given the whole domain to freedom, both north and south of the Ohio. That handsomer scope was then prevented, because States south of Virginia reserved the rights of slavery for the territory they ceded to the Union; and Tennessee, Mis-

sissippi, and Alabama grew up slave States accordingly.

"Give the fresh acreage henceforth to wheat and thistles, roses and weeds"—this was the magnanimity of the new gospel of popular or squatter sovereignty. The deeper danger of Clay's latest compromise, we have already seen, was in admitting that new territorial fallacy, though the fugitive-slave act caused the more instant irritation. "With or without slavery," that optional policy which the compromise of 1850 asserted over new soil wholly and indisputably belonging to the United States was sure to breed trouble, not only when its settlement should begin in earnest, but whenever another acquisition came into the arms of the Union. More mischievous by far did the precedent actually prove, under the claim now set up by the authors of the Kansas-Nebraska act, that it retroacted upon the earlier territory of the Louisiana purchase—that it annulled the sacred pledge of 1820. Such was the argument in which Davis took afterwards a cynical delight, and which Douglas wielded as a two-edged sword. Wicked and impudent sophism; and could only Clay or Webster have left his grave and stalked into the Senate-chamber, his look would have turned the man who uttered it into stone. Seward, in debate, had appealed to the Southern Senators before him who sat in this chamber now, as four years ago, to say whether any one of them had dreamed that the compromise of 1850 abrogated or impaired the Missouri Compromise; they were silent. He adjured them to say whether Clay or Webster, or either one of them, had so intended when procuring that compromise; and these fellow-members were silent again. Grant, if we must, that one Congress cannot bind forever—and, if that

rule be good, the later compromise was no more sacred than the earlier one—yet the moral force of the Missouri settlement remained; slavery had received her equivalent under it in Missouri and Arkansas, and the vacant territories now organized belonged of right to freedom. Retroaction, in fine, has no part in settling domestic more than foreign controversies of such a character. In either case, we seek, not symmetry, but what the existing exigency requires. The settlement composes the matters of strife which are brought expressly into it; immediate convenience and necessity are its object; it seeks to close new wounds, not to reopen old ones. As well go back to readjust the northeast boundary with Great Britain, after concluding the Oregon frontier, because the principle of the later treaty was a different one, as to unsettle the territorial status of our Louisiana purchase, once solemnly prescribed, for the sake of making it harmonize in principle with that which was set upon the domain we conquered afterwards from Mexico.

The convenient logic of non-intervention in the territories must have been peculiarly captivating to Northern Presidential aspirants of the era who wished to face in two directions. Slaveholding members, especially when the debate began, were disposed to be passive and accept the gift of the gods; they did not wish to repudiate the Missouri settlement without Northern concurrence. But when one Northern Senator put the saddle upon this dogma, and another the bridle, while a Northern President obsequiously offered the stirrup, Southern chivalry acted by its instincts when it bestrode the steed to ride it.

The consummation of this Kansas-Nebraska plot,

which a few ambitious leaders had concocted, shook the free States once more to their centres with just indignation. Slavery was at length disclosed as an aggressive force bent upon dominating the policy of the American continent. Thousands of fair-minded citizens, who had been incredulous, were at last convinced that mere abstinence from agitation and intermeddling would neither save the Union nor satisfy the Southerners. Northern Whigs, not too abject to value their moral self-respect, felt that they had compromised enough, and more than enough; that pious preaching and cowardly palliation would make us, if we went on thus, a nation of hypocrites. Without the help of Southern Whigs, their late party associates—men like Pearce, Badger, Jones, Toombs, the plumed Stephens and the faltering Clayton—that treacherous bill would never have passed. "Repudiate such fraternity," was the cry; "throw old party considerations to the winds, and appeal to the honest people of the free States, without distinction of politics." And calling God to witness the justice of their cause, the better remnant of the Northern Whigs fled from the Sodom and Gomorrah where old compacts were smoking in the flames. Anti-slavery Democrats, Free Soilers, all who would unite with them to fight the Dagon of slave aggrandizement under the shield and banner of the constitution, were brothers. No matter that some were scrupulous of consequences, while others hoped in time to make the universe free; their common political ground was loyal and legitimate resistance to slavery extension into free national territory. All opponents of slave extension might meet on this common platform.

1854. May–Sept.

The project for fusing men of all the old parties who

were opposed to slavery extension into a new or anti-Nebraska party developed rapidly at the North. Free Soilers, old line Whigs, Wilmot-Proviso Democrats, men at the antipodes of sentiment, so far as the cause of practical emancipation was concerned, came into concert. But the process was necessarily gradual and tentative; affairs were not yet ripe for national concert; and the States and Congressional districts were this year the proper places for activity.

In tracing the growth and influence of national parties, we must now take cognizance of the Native-American or Know-Nothing organization. This was a sort of exhalation, arising from the decay of old parties and putrid national issues; it served as a brief phenomenon of the times and then passed off. Like anti-Masonry, its soap-bubble burst in the effort to blow up to the size of a Presidential factor. But some such political diversion suited quite tolerably the mood of that huge fraction of the people, loyal but disaffected on the usual issues, who felt just now political orphanage. During that twelvemonth of delusive harmony which was broken so rudely by the discord of the Kansas-Nebraska strife, defeated Whigs and rebellious Democrats plunged thoughtlessly by the thousands into this new excitement of Native Americanism, and were led on eventually step by step until they found themselves sworn members of a dark-lantern order, the opposite of anti-Masonry. The order was a secret one, popularly called "Know-Nothings," because its members, when questioned as to its methods and principles, were sworn to profess their entire ignorance. Abuses in the administration of large cities more especially they proposed to rectify by excluding foreigners from office. They revived the bitter spirit of intolerance

against the Roman Catholic Church—such as ten years before had been shown in the riots of Charlestown and Philadelphia—by representing it as foreign, the handmaid of popular ignorance, and bent on chaining America to the throne of the Vatican.

Foreign relations for the next six years are dwarfed and overshadowed by the tremendous struggle for civil preponderance which now ensued between the irreconcilable forces of freedom and slavery. That domestic struggle culminated during this same brief space of time in the political triumph of the one, followed promptly by the appeal of the other to disunion and the sword of civil war. What most absorbed public attention in those important years must now command ours as we retrace the course of portentous events. As for that cormorant appetite for seizing weak sovereignties to the southward and incorporating them with the American Union—that hungry zeal to extend a protectorate over Central America, to annex Cuba, to split off new sections of Mexican territory fringing upon our national borders—that whole misguided policy of robbery and subjugation which seeks to conceal its cruel features under the mask of manifest destiny—its symptoms become of secondary consequence. External and forced expansion towards the tropics was but one element of the cotton slaveholders' policy to propagate their peculiar institutions, or, at least, to keep slavery in good countenance against what seemed to them the meddlesome philanthropy of mankind. It had started out with this Democratic administration as the predominant element; but the Kansas-Nebraska bill of Douglas, which gave slavery an

1855.

unexpected entrance into freedom's solemn reservations, distracted the glut of distant conquest. The wolf grew more ravenous than ever; but, ravenous in two different directions, he roused up enemies too mighty for him.

Kansas now becomes the foreground of public interest, the battle-field where freedom and slavery gird up their loins and contend for the mastery. Of the two territories, Kansas and Nebraska, both of which were set apart for the new experiment of popular sovereignty, desecrated and driven from the sanctuary of that former decree which prohibited slavery altogether, Kansas was the more southerly, and from its situation the more suitable for planting institutions of bondage. It occupied nearly the same parallel as Virginia, and lay due west of the slave State of Missouri, whose boundaries were next adjacent. This whole interior region of Kansas and Nebraska had hitherto remained practically unsettled and little known; but its invitation was to agriculture, and peaceful rivers meandered through its soft scenery.

Kansas presented a tame and uniform aspect of gently undulating ridges and valleys; its territory, as now defined, extending northward from our Indian reservations to the fortieth parallel of latitude, and west from the State of Missouri to the Rocky Mountains. In this broad parallelogram was embraced an area reckoned at about 126,000 square miles. At the passage of the Douglas bill, Kansas was an Indian reservation; and the fact that Indians would be despoiled of their rightful domains by erecting this territory was urged very strongly in debate by Everett, Bell, Houston, and others, who, timorous on the main issue involved in the bill, laid strong hold upon second-

ary objections. About some scattered missions here of the Southern Methodist Church, and on the farms of a few capricious squatters, slaves appear to have been worked for several years previously. Had Congress passed the territorial act anticipated, in compliance with the restrictions of 1820, that abuse would have been easily expelled. But now this compromise was rescinded, and Kansas might be admitted as a State, "with or without slavery," according to the option of its inhabitants hereafter.

The national convention of the new Republican party assembled at Philadelphia, June 17, 1856, pursuant to the call of a Pittsburg meeting of February 22, whose invitation was freely extended to all who thought alike upon the new crisis of affairs, "without regard to past political differences or divisions." Old Whigs, Wilmot-Proviso Democrats, and Free Soilers came together, but the slave States in general held haughtily back. Henry S. Lane, of Indiana, was chosen chairman; and, in a platform full of felicitous phrases, the convention, strongly affirming its allegiance to the constitution, the Union, and the rights of States, laid down that Congress had sovereign power over the national territories, and ought to exercise that power not to assist slavery, but to prohibit it. An informal ballot being had for candidates, John C. Fremont, of California, the pathfinder, led strongly for President, and nearly all the votes being cast in his favor on a first formal ballot, his nomination was made unanimous. For Vice-President, a conservative citizen, William L. Dayton, of New Jersey, was nominated in the same harmonious spirit.

1856.

True was it, in a physical sense, that the present Republican party began by being geographical. But this was from the force of accidental circumstances, and because the South had departed from the faith of the fathers, and refused either to have emancipation discussed or to confine the slave system to the fifteen States in which it now existed. In the truly enlightened sense it was slavery that was sectional and geographical, while freedom was national and universal. And yet, in the prevailing opinion of the voting mass, North as well as South, Republicanism this year was doomed to defeat; such was the reverence felt for Union, as influenced by long precedent and the equilibrium of systems.

"We have lost a battle," was the comment of a Republican organ on the day after election; "the Bunker Hill of the new struggle for freedom is past; the Saratoga and Yorktown are yet to be achieved." And surely, when these electoral results were fully reckoned, they might well have carried dismay to the citadel of pro-slavery strength. Never had so great a work been done by a political party within the first year of its birth, against deep and inveterate prejudices which were too irrational not to diminish, should provocation to free sentiment continue.

CHAPTER XXII.

ADMINISTRATION OF JAMES BUCHANAN.

§ I. Period of Thirty-fifth Congress. March 4, 1857-March 3, 1859.—§ II. Period of Thirty-sixth Congress. March 4, 1859-March 3, 1861.

HUMAN ambition is the constant motive force of public events, the staple of historical narration. And the world's experience shows that the meaner ambition of place for the sake of power and pelf dominates men's minds more than the desire to use high station for the good of the governed. In a fierce and fighting age, one wades through slaughter to reach the supreme distinction; while under the softening influences of a settled and peaceful government, whose prizes are awarded by the general suffrage, his constant temptation is to resort to corrupt, insidious, and flattering arts for gaining promotion from his fellow-citizens. Among statesmen struggling for immediate popularity, even the noblest are in danger of weakening in the high principles which their hearts tell them are right, while the coarser-grained grovel and fawn obsequiously, as though the title to superiority on their part involved no gift of discernment beyond the common level, or as panderers to the particular lust which those who can elevate them to office wish gratified.

In the American days we are describing, the fountain of national honors was in full possession of the Demo-

cratic party—a party whose deepest principles had splendid vigor and vitality, but whose immediate policy had become dangerously perverted. That perversion was owing to the new crusade slavery was urging against the enlightenment of the age; and the slave power, the oligarchy of human capital, now ruled the Democratic party, the fountain of honors, and the citadel of national strength. The moral opposition of the world only whetted slavery's desire to overrule that opposition; and it grew tyrannous and exacting in these days, to the verge of rebellion. It was the Prætorian band which fixed and unfixed administrations, and like its Roman prototype, made up for inferiority in numbers by compact strength, discipline, and unity of purpose. How many political leaders of these times bent to its iron dictates, and in consequence sank into their graves, moral and corruptible, with honors as earthy as their epitaphs. Pierce, Cass, Douglas, and hundreds of others less conspicuous, are of that number; and the record of a new four years will constrain us to add Buchanan. It is something for fame to have filled high stations—to have heaped office upon office, performed weighty functions, dispensed wide patronage; these are among the good things which are enjoyed in this life and exhausted. But where is posthumous fame, where is the gratitude of coming generations, when one's sordid ambition has been confined to making himself solid with the ruling and transitory influences which enable him to rise, and he leaves to posterity neither the inspiration of a great cause nor a great example?

Rebellion in Utah—that far-off territory where a

population of aliens submitted to a strange hierarchy—was an issue that forced comparisons with Kansas. It was less the suppression of polygamous practices that our administration cared for—for the Republicans might engross all moral agitation for their own party benefit—than to keep these strange settlers obedient to the constitution and the laws. Even in the latter sense alone, Utah contradicted that pompous formula of non-intervention by the general government which had been preached up so strongly for Kansas. For what boots it to spill the nation's blood and treasure in acquiring new territory, that hostile and treacherous systems may be planted and reared there by those who colonize? National indulgence here had made Mormonism more defiant and disaffected to the Union. All the tenets and policy of that church, under its despotic leaders, had tended to secure an Israelitish seclusion, in contempt of all external and temporal authority. To this would-be "State of Deseret" President Fillmore had assigned Brigham Young, the spiritual head of the church, as territorial governor; and by 1857, when a Democratic President showed the disposition to apply the usual temporal rule of rotation to the office, Young was rebellious, and the whole Mormon population, refusing allegiance to any one but their consecrated head, began to drill and gird on their armor for resistance.

1857–58. Judges of the territorial courts had to flee for their lives; justice, which had long been tampered with to absolve church members from punishment, was deprived of process. It was charged that the Mormon hierarchy had leagued with Indian tribes to impel them to atrocities against the Gentile inhabitants, while their own Danites, or destroying angels, were secretly set apart and bound by horrid

oath to pillage and murder such as made themselves obnoxious to the theocracy. This was popular sovereignty with a vengeance. But in 1858 that rebellion was put forcibly down.

Douglas and Lincoln were formidable adversaries of each other, and a long linking of events had somehow opposed them in an antagonism which was permanent and inveterate. With a pathos almost bitter, Lincoln recalled that while through the long years they had pursued ambition by their different methods he had thus far failed, his rival had gained splendid success and a name that filled the whole Union with applause; and yet honors that he said he would not have purchased at the price paid for them. With all his popular qualities, his great natural parts, the real love of country which mingled no doubt with all his dross of sycophancy and spread-eagleism, so that he could stir the heart by forceful appeal to patriotic feelings, Douglas, no doubt, as Lincoln regarded him, was cunning and unscrupulous in obtaining his ends. Lincoln himself was a sagacious politician, and not above advancing his own ends, where he could do so honorably; but earnestness grew upon him with years, and the new Free-Soil movement which followed upon the repeal of the Missouri Compromise gave him a cause which enlisted his whole heart, adding that incentive to leadership and mastery of his subject which the economic topics of Whig policy, his first political love, had ill supplied. Strong impulse to a self-made man supplies the place of education. Lincoln, now in the full maturity of his powers, was without comprehensive

1858.

knowledge of public affairs; but with a strong craving to dive into the depths of the truth, and a well-settled conviction that American slavery was wrong in itself and injuriously spreading, he had plunged into the study of the question in all its historical, moral, and constitutional aspects, and brought up a wealth of rich argument and illustration, which his lucid mind set forth in a quaint and original but strongly persuasive manner—persuasive most of all with the plain multitude, with the millions of common men throughout the North with whom at this time Lincoln was in entire sympathy, and who, like himself, wished to reconcile loyalty to the Union and justice to Southern rights with obedience to a better law divine. In such minds grew up the strong belief that, while existing slave States were exempt from national interference, there could be no extension of the slave system further without national participation and a national crime.

Douglas, at Chicago, in early July, answered the speech which Lincoln had made to the Republican convention on the evening of his nomination. The two then carried on a joint debate at various interior towns between the 21st of August and the 15th of September —thousands of the country folk gathering at each place by wagon or on foot, but no political flags or mottoes being allowed. Each orator presented most strikingly the strong points of his case, and neither the patronizing condescension nor the skilful thrusts of the famous statesman who was by all odds the readiest speaker in the United States Senate, could disconcert for a moment his adversary, whose good humor warded off the shafts which were intended for ridicule. Genial and rollicking with the boys, and yet confident to the point of arrogance in a controversy, and even supercilious,

Douglas aired his "care-nothing" views upon the moral aspects of slavery, and vaunted it as the generous and liberal policy of the age—as the "great principle" for patriotic souls who knew no sectional limits to unite upon—to acquire, extend, and expand our boundaries, leaving whomsoever might settle upon it to plant institutions, slave or free, as their own choice. Herein Douglas appeared to less advantage than in the late Lecompton debates, where he had been clearly right. Not careful to take his position justly, and feeling the need of reconciling his late votes with his whole former career as an active ally of the Southern Democracy, and of regaining what he could of their support presently, he was forced back to his old trick of misrepresenting Republican doctrines and jeering at "negro equality." But he was a powerful and impressive man to gaze upon, looking with his small but compact stature like a lion's whelp; he shook back his heavy hair, and in his most impressive passages roared with a loud voice, articulating thickly and making violent gestures. Lincoln's power as an orator lay not less in his strong individuality; but tall, awkward in the use of his limbs, and with a voice piercing rather than melodious in his most animated periods, his charm flowed rather from the impression he gave that his convictions were genuine and his whole nature imbued with the simple and uncondescending love of his fellow-men.

It was not time yet for broad philanthropy to infuse the sentiment of Lincoln's State. Douglas prevailed, as for various reasons it was natural he should have done. He was canvassing this time for political existence, against foes of his own party who were bent on destroying him. The hostility of the Buchanan cabinet towards him created friends among Republi-

can opponents. But the popular verdict upon the contest of principle, aside from present candidates, was on the other side; and the Republicans of the State, though defeated for the time, remembered their standard-bearer, "honest Abe," with proud affection and gratitude. Lincoln's campaign speeches achieved for him a splendid Western reputation; they were seen to be of a very high order—pungent, clear as crystal in their logic and expression, and truly admirable as condensed statements of the national issues at stake.

One remarkable statement drawn out from Douglas in this joint debate showed the schism which was widening in the Democratic ranks by the agency of the Dred Scott decision. According to the President, the slaveholders, and all who accepted the fiat of the court in that celebrated case, "the great principle of popular sovereignty" was largely restrained; for the right to hold slaves in a territory was declared by a majority of the judges to exist, by virtue of the Federal compact, until the territory grew to statehood, and chose to exclude the right under a State constitution. This was no application of the Douglas dogma to canvass a Northwestern State upon; and Douglas, when pressed in debate for his opinion on this point, took the ground that, whatever the Supreme Court might decide on the abstract question, the people of a territory had the lawful means to introduce or exclude slavery as they pleased. For slavery could not exist a day or an hour unless supported by local police regulations, and the local legislature could "by unfriendly legislation" effectually prevent its introduction. This answer sufficiently commended Douglas to his constituents of Illinois for re-election to the Senate, but as a Presi-

dential aspirant it sealed his doom, for the breach with the Southern and ruling wing of the Democracy was thenceforth irreparable.

Had Lincoln been equally exposed to public gaze at this time as a national candidate, he, too, might have suffered, like so many who appeal to popular favor, the victim of bold phrases. Though shrewd and practical at all times, disposed to confine himself to the immediate evil which needed correction, and scrupulous of all intervening rights, he could not have studied the stupendous problem of the times so profoundly as he had done without some prophetic forecast of the future. In his speech of acceptance he had said: "A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved—I do not expect the house to fall; but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all of one thing or all of the other." No wonder that Lincoln's friends were troubled at this bold utterance. No wonder that his adversary tore at it with holy rage as abolition heresy, the advocacy of sectional war, fratricide, servile insurrection, and the blotting out of States. It happened that the same idea was expressed this autumn by Seward, in a Rochester speech, which pronounced in more ornate language the same prediction. There was, he declared, "an irrepressible conflict" between opposing and enduring forces, which, sooner or later, would make the United States either entirely a slaveholding or entirely a free-labor nation. It was not a new prophecy on his part, nor bolder than he had uttered years earlier; but Seward was now the most eminent expounder of the Republican faith, and the most probable standard-bearer of his party for 1860; hence the

phrase, which was caught up everywhere, made him a shining mark for his foes. Both Seward and Lincoln were right; and they proposed no brutal and bloody interference with constitutional rights, but aid and comfort to the cause of emancipation where slave States were concerned, besides higher moral tone and purpose for all occasions. Freedom's host was still timorous; many of the politicians in council would have turned the Republican party out to browse among secular projects, now that Kansas had emerged from its worst plight; and the angry roar of dissent which went up from every quarter of the Union against the "irrepressible conflict" theory showed that loyalty was blind to the signs of the time.

Presidential movements were now in progress. The early national convention of the Democrats had been set already for Charleston, as though that party, already infatuated with the South, were descending into the very hot-bed of secession and aristocratic obduracy. The heated wrangle of the New York "hards" and "softs" in their recent State convention was one of many indications that this next national gathering would split up in irreconcilable feud.

1859.

Three Southern speeches had been promulgated during the anxious summer by three Southern leaders of different types. Stephens of Georgia, Rhett of South Carolina, and Jefferson Davis were the several speakers: the first, to his constituents on the occasion of his retirement from Congress; the second, on the celebration day of our independence; the third, before the Democratic State convention at Jackson. Rhett,

who had long since left the Senate and public life, uttered rank secession; and for years he had prophesied and dissolved the Union to the best of his ability. Stephens spoke as one whose interests still centred in the Union; Davis, as a Unionist upon condition. "If a President," said the latter, "should be elected on the platform of Seward's Rochester speech, then let the Union be dissolved."

The scheme of national policy which the two greater of these orators advanced laid stress upon the newly discovered right which Southern slaveholders possessed, to settle with their human property in the territories, protected by the constitution on a platform of equal rights. In the triumph of such a principle the slavery exclusion doctrine of Rufus King, the Missouri Compromise doctrine, and the Texas doctrine had all been abandoned. But non-intervention, aided by the Dred Scott decision, did not go far enough. (1) They wished Congress to enact a slave code, to give positive protection to slave property in the public domain while the territorial condition lasted. (2) And more than this, since the natural increase of the African stock was not enough for the extension and preservation of Southern institutions, it was desirable to repeal the act of Congress which made the African slave trade piracy; that whole subject belonging more properly to the discretion of the several States. (3) External expansion was the last great principle for the South to carry out; Central America and Mexico were open to our acquisition, and Cuba most of all. Stephens was not in favor of paying Spain much for her island; but if Cuba wished to come into the Union, he was for repealing the neutrality laws so as to give our people a chance to help her. Davis kept a clear eye upon con-

tingencies; he viewed the acquisition of such a prize as advantageous to the whole Union if the Union continued, and of still greater advantage to the South in the event of a new confederacy.

These three new points of Democratic departure, all aggressive, might well alarm the friends of freedom. Slaveholding philosophy was making its votaries mad. To Stephens's mind it seemed that slavery was stronger to-day than ever before. And Davis solved by ethnology the whole relation of the weaker races; negroes, he affirmed, had not here nor in Liberia shown capacity for self-governing, and hence the good of society required that they should be kept in their normal condition of servitude. Davis was a public leader whom Stephens himself, feeble by comparison in executive force, deferred to. He was unquestionably the foremost man of the far South at the present day; and since Quitman's death his command could not be disputed. Energy, boldness, and consummate weight of character had given him a national reputation and influence; his style of speech was trenchant and analytical, with an occasional arrogance which betrayed the training of a soldier and plantation lord, as well as his keen consciousness of mental superiority. This thin, pale, polished, and intellectual-looking son of Mississippi, of passive demeanor and habitual courtesy, sat in the national Congress among commonplace, blustering, and bibulous colleagues, almost the only man left there of that higher grade of Southern gentlemen which was once so common in public life. To the projects of policy which Davis now brought forward the opinion of the cotton States was already moving. Efforts, for instance, were already there in progress to reopen the African slave trade—the first step being to denational-

ize the crime. And truly if slave traffic were morally right, and the local supply insufficient, why was not the argument a good one? The Southern mind was undergoing a change on this question. Public men of the old school, like Houston and Wise, might speak with abhorrence of the proposal, but the great Jefferson himself was out of date in posthumous inspiration, and the act to which he had placed his signature no longer sacred.

John Brown was no Cæsar, no Cromwell, but a plain citizen of a free republic, whom distressing events drove into a fanaticism to execute purposes to which he was incompetent. He detested 1859. slavery, and that detestation led him to take up arms not only against slavery, but against that public opinion which was slowly formulating how best to eradicate it. Woe to the conquered. The North made no appeals for that clemency which slaveholders had alone to consider. Brown had not been lenient to masters, nor were masters bound to be lenient to him. And yet Brown was an enthusiast, and not a felon; the essence of his crime was unselfish. Like the French country maiden who went to Paris to plunge her dagger into a bloody ruler's heart, he meant to rescue good morals from the usurpation of human laws. Corday fulfilled her solitary plan because it was reasonable; John Brown failed in his plan because it was unreasonable; but both, as actors and martyrs, flashing upon the world's attention like new meteors, left examples of self-sacrifice, the one upon the guillotine, and the other upon the gallows, which a people could not refrain from exalting. The virgin damsel of grace and

beauty, and the grim old man of sixty, stern and sanguinary, who led on his sons, take equal hold of posterity's imagination; of each one it has been said, by acute observers, that the immediate effect of their deeds was injurious to politics; and yet society in the long centuries is stronger for being thus taught that despotism over fellow-men is not safely hedged in by authority. Brown's stalwart, unique, and spectral figure led on, grotesque but terribly in earnest, the next time Virginia's soil was invaded—not, however, for executing any such unfeasible scheme of making the slaves their own avengers, but to apply the war powers of the nation against disloyal masters.

The Republican Convention met May 16th, 1860, at Chicago; and a place more in contrast with the Palmetto city, more typical of another civilization, this Union could not have furnished. Charleston, where the Democratic convention was held, to be split asunder, was aristocratic, dogmatic, disdainful of the plebeian mass, and disposed to brood over the past; Chicago was prosaic, and like its rectangular system of streets splendidly commonplace, boastful through vanity rather than pride, brimming with the ostentatious hospitality of sudden wealth; yet growing upon the margins which remained from its mortgages to Eastern capital, so as to seem more wealthy and expansive than it really was. This lake city, without a past but absorbed in the present and future, was the genuine product of free settlement and free institutions; the wide-awake commercial and distributing centre of the great Northwest, whose foible was the ambition to be the light of the world; prolific, and figuring its popula-

tion so rapidly as to be already near the point of taking the crown from the old "queen of the West"—for Cincinnati, from her border position acquired a certain constraint and conservatism which her younger sister and rival never owned.

The breezy Northwest had been the first originator of freedom's Republican party; Illinois, a State of Jacksonian farmers who had voted constantly the Democratic ticket, was important to win over; and Chicago had not procured the proud distinction of the present Republican convention on her remote slope without intending to drive a trade and coin direct advantage out of free-handed entertainment, as was customary with her citizens. The Republican party had been looking about anxiously for a winning candidate. Made up of such incongruous elements, and in some sense fortuitous ones, it had brought together, in spite of great leaders and great ideas, a host of small-fry agitators and fanatics, men whose range of vision was fixed upon one spot, or who had no range of vision at all. Hypocrites also were in plenty, as they always are when moral reforms are preached, and the little great, "fishing" (to apply the disdainful phrase of Everett) "with ever freshly baited hook in the turbid waters of ephemeral popularity." It was scarcely a step from these regenerators of a society which gave them no recognition to the ranting fanatics, the disunionists, and the foul instigators of free love, passional attraction, and individual sovereignty, who occupied the near background. Conservatism in all things was still the strong force of American society, and the name of radical was thought only less unendurable than that of abolitionist. The practical concerns of the country were constantly brought up against mere preachers;

not even Republicans, in the mass, believed seriously that the Union would last without a slaveholding caste; and it was no wonder that those against whose heads were flung the ugly epithets of "freedom-shrieker," "negro-worshipper," "woolly-head" and "Black Republican"—or at least the politicians among them—should seek for better ballast by winning from among their Northern fellow-citizens as many as possible of that solid and respectable set who held the social keys and were in league with the college-bred. Amid all these efforts for changing and broadening the scope of the new Anti-Nebraska party—this spreading of the net to catch conservatives—while others, again, had a hyper-devotion for the negro cause which betokened insincerity—many of the best Republicans doubted seriously that the anti-slavery men had either the faith or the sagacity to make a President. There were not, they thought, enough anti-slavery men who were honest; while as for the impracticables, the rabid abolitionists, slavery had not another body of servitors half so useful and efficient.

The Republicans had been hoping since 1856 to conquer in 1860. Though the Democratic schism was a godsend to them, yet the charge of sectionalism was a heavy load to carry. The ideal candidate would have been from one of the slave States, but there was no one with weight of character sufficient. Edward Bates, of Missouri, a former Whig, came nearest to this description, but he was better fitted to counsel than direct. Seward was, by all odds, the foremost man in the party; as governor and senator of the greatest State in the Union, he had borne the burden and heat of the cause long before public sympathy came to his side.

Chase, his worthiest competitor, conceded to him the merit of superiority. But years and increasing success had raised up rivals to Seward, while he had been the target of all party foes; and prophet though he was, his "irrepressible conflict" made men afraid of defeat under him as a standard-bearer. While the sagacious had thus looked about, Illinois Republicans had pushed their peculiar candidate in such a way that should Seward, the natural nominee for President, fail of success, he would forestall all others. And surely, in the candidacy of "honest Abe Lincoln," there was something which announced him as, almost providentially, the man for the times. His Whig antecedents, and his whole cast and habits, indulged the idea of conservatism; locality was in his favor, could disappointed rivals from the greater States take up the march under him; if not a slaveholder, the whole record of his life and early struggles exemplified the happy transfer from slave to free institutions; while his unique and striking personality, his sympathetic qualities, his raciness, and the homely honesty and steadfast moral purpose which lit up his whole character, were sure to impress the people in his favor. And withal, Lincoln's long absence from public service favored that unacquaintance for which many an ambitious man would gladly exchange that dangerous talisman, a public record. And finally, there was something like poetic justice in putting forward the man who had won over Douglas a moral victory to oppose him again on a fairer field. Lincoln had been strong enough in the convention of 1856 to poll a respectable vote as Vice-President; but he was now immeasurably stronger, though far from being appreciated beyond his immediate environment,

in his consummate tact and the subtler qualities of his statesmanship.

It was the opportunity for Buchanan to have sounded a trumpet note which would disconcert disloyal citizens and recall the doubtful to their duty. Lincoln and the Republicans had fairly won the election. But the President, with three months longer to serve, had not in him the stuff of heroic purpose. He was a loyal man after his sort, but secessionism raged about him, and kept its last clutch upon his cabinet circle. His opening message was craven and cowardly for the emergency; its whole scope was to upbraid the people for their choice of a President, and exhort them to fall upon their knees to propitiate the fellow-citizens they had out-voted, and avert the dire calamity of disunion which otherwise seemed inevitable. Explanatory amendments to the constitution were suggested as a basis of capitulation—slavery to be recognized as rightful in all States now or hereafter choosing to adopt the system; negro ownership to be protected in all national domains while the territorial condition lasted; all State laws which interfered with the surrender of fugitive slaves to be null and void. The inefficacy of the constitution to preserve the Union against domestic violence, such as now impended, was maintained in a fine-spun argument to the effect that, while secession was unlawful, a State which attempted to secede could not be coerced into submission.

1860. December.

In short, the President's message, whose loyal expression was strained in the skim-milk of apology, was

ill-calculated for anything but to encourage disunion to go on with its work. There was no vigor in it, no backbone; transgressors were not recalled to their loyal obligations; no money, no military strength, no means of collecting the public revenue or of protecting the public property were asked for; some phrases might be tortured into one view of executive responsibility, others into another, but the too evident meaning of the whole was irresolution.

"Oh, for an hour of Jackson!" was the spontaneous cry of conscience Democrats. Never before was the weak joint of our constitutional armor so clearly exposed, which kept the whole resources of this vast government sequestered for four months after the people had declared their will, in control of an administration and Congress defeated at the polls.

Southern disunionists did not falter; they were not spinning out distinctions, just now, for the vanity of a constitutional argument, but they went straight forward to their object. South Carolina took the field quickly. The State convention met at Columbia on the 17th of December, but small-pox prevailing there, an adjournment was carried so as to meet at Charleston on the following day. A salute of fifteen guns—one for each slaveholding State—welcomed the members to this latter city. On the 20th of the month an ordinance of secession, reported from an appropriate committee, was unanimously adopted; and after being engrossed on parchment, was publicly signed by all the members of the convention—one hundred and sixty-nine in number—who thought, no doubt, that in their chamber fame was born. A "declaration of independence" followed on the 24th, which borrowed the im-

mortal phrase of Philadelphia in mutually pledging "our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor."

We were now on the verge of a terrible civil conflict, costly and sanguinary as the world ever knew. Private citizens, in many instances, saw its approach more clearly than did statesmen long experienced in public life. Thirty-one millions of inhabitants, bristling geographically on two sides in hostile array—more than ten times the whole number that had withstood the mother country in the first struggle for American independence—was a spectacle for the world to contemplate with amazement. Events hurried to the climax of arms before either side was well aware of it. In the free States more especially, so strong had grown the habit of belief in the perpetuity of the Union that men clung tenaciously to the idea that political craft would span the situation as it had often done before; that negotiation, honorable or dishonorable, some new bundle of mutual concessions, would bolster up the old league of social systems. Not until the rash cannon of South Carolina thundered at Fort Sumter was that illusory hope dispelled; and when the defenders of the Union and the avengers of the insulted starry banner sprang to arms, each party to the conflict found foemen worthy of his steel. What splendid prowess of victory, could those ranks have been seen reuniting to march all one way against a common foe. And with such a spirit of deadly earnest in the strife, it was inevitable that they who had invited it, weakened and handicapped by the very system of bondage they had plunged into secession with the foolish hope of preserving, should bite the dust. Numbers,

1861. March.

resources, ingenuity, the opinion of the civilized world, were all against them. And yet the responsibilities of the Union cause at the time when the first Republican President came to assume them must have been appalling.

"Conspiracy," "treason," were names at first applied, all too narrowly, to those who struggled to break from the Union. "Rebellion" is a more enduring and appropriate word; but to a strife of such gigantic proportions the law has been compelled to concede so many belligerent privileges that the status, as time goes on, will be recognized, more and more, as that of a "civil war." We must divest ourselves of the false impression that the crime of a few Southern leaders produced the real mischief. Plunderers, treacherous abusers, like Floyd, Thompson, and Twiggs, of the power confided in them, must ever be execrated by all who respect honor and principle; but they who led the cotton States into rebellion felt a strong public opinion behind them, and led in what among their own constituents was a popular cause. To be sure, they passed from conventions to a provisional confederacy with little of what, in the purest American sense, seemed like a submission to the popular vote. That, however, was in pursuance of class and oligarchical political methods to which the slave section of the country had been well accustomed.

Among these earlier seceding States, at least, which bore with enthusiasm the standard of slavery propagandism, misconception, false education, and the habits of life which a slave system fosters, made the cause of their new revolution a popular one. Men rallied here to destroy the Union as readily as at the North to uphold it; and that latent loyalty, upon which our gov-

ernment reckoned in the early days of the war to produce a counter-revolution proved always a fallacious hope. The philosophy of Southern statesmanship was, in truth, poisoned and vitiated at its source by the sophistries of the great Calhoun, that pure-minded man of dual character, devoted in his last years to the experiment which now bore fruit, whose strong feelings set him to some resolute purpose, for which his subtle and ingenious mind worked out the logical reasons. The harm diffused thus throughout the South was that not uncommon one of taking false maxims for first principles. Secession and slavery became thus abstractly right; the economics of slave labor, the potent forces which must rule the world; loyalty to the State and to the slave system took priority of loyalty to the Union; and for years dreams of ambition and cupidity had drawn this people insensibly onward to the precipice of disunion. And thus the new Confederacy, which leaders now struck to establish, was but the attempted realization of visions long indulged. The majority of States and of the American people had been trained differently.

Some have thought that Davis and his compeers of the Montgomery Congress hoped still for concessions from the North which would save the Union, after the manner of former compromises. Facts do not justify altogether this favorable view, though many, no doubt, cherished that belief for a time in States, like Virginia, which long wavered. South Carolina was confident, self-sufficient; and among the bold and buoyant spirits who set rebellion in motion, the real belief appears rather to have been that they would yet dictate terms, and reconstruct the old Union upon their new basis. But what they reckoned upon, with even more fatuous

confidence, was the cowardly inertness of the free States. They anticipated no war which would draw out the whole resources of the Union against them; they expected, at the least, to be let alone; left to secede in peace, and to arrange some division of the common debts and property. The North, on its own part, failed to understand the South; here it was too commonly believed that slaveholders would bluster and come back again, as they had done before; that in a strife so unequal they would not fight. This rebellion had been ripening ever since slavery became a growing force in our Union, partaking of the national spirit of expansion. And because slavery and freedom were both expanding and enduring forces in those days, the collision, which compromise had but temporarily postponed, was sooner or later inevitable.

No people surely, on either side, ever shouldered the musket to sustain a cause with more faithfulness to ideas, stronger convictions of public duty, than did the Southern and the Northern in the present struggle; the one devoted to his State, the other to the Union; and the progress of the civil strife gave, too, to moral agitators their share in the glory of results. For, under the circumstances, nothing but the appeal to rally round the flag and preserve the public property, the constitution, and the laws, could have united the loyal people to the northward, irrespective of past party ties, in so splendid a demonstration. And nothing, moreover, as events went on, but the downfall and destruction of that whole pernicious system which was at the root of all the great troubles of the century, and obstructed the destiny and growth of the American people in homogeneous grandeur, would have made the Union worth sustaining through the long, costly, and calami-

tous strife, or kept the North constant to bear it through.

Washington at this time wore the aspect of a beleaguered city. Thanks to the energy and foresight of General Scott, and the cabinet coterie which saved Buchanan from ignominious shame, there were now over six hundred troops stationed at the national capital, exclusive of marines at the navy yard, to preserve order and peace at the coming inauguration.

There was trepidation and excitement in this city—the whole aspect of its society rapidly changing already by the exodus of the Southern, now disloyal element, which had given it character. Slovenly and threadbare still, this only child of the nation gained yet something in attractiveness before colossal events were to make the city historical. A grand aqueduct, with water supply from the falls of the Potomac, was among the greatest of its more recent enterprises. Still stood the familiar White House upon the executive reservation at the west end, with three drab buildings of brick, which housed the State department on one side, and the war and the navy on the other; but the granite extensions of the treasury, superadding noble fronts at north and south to the old sandstone colonnade, promised a more imposing architecture. Down on the flats of the Potomac was seen the marble shaft of the monument to Washington, long to remain unfinished, now that the older sentiment of personal veneration failed for a sectional cement. On yonder beautiful heights of Capitol Hill spread out the white, unfolded wings of the national legislature like an eagle on its perpetual perch; but the grand central dome was as yet but par-

tially completed, and its full spans of glass and iron were wanting. It was long before that central dome was finished; longer, far longer, before the disused derrick upon that Washington obelisk was to give place that earnest work might carry its shaft to the clouds. But regeneration preceded harmony; and when that dome was completed, and the great bronze statue of liberty, already designed for it, had been placed in position at its apex, a brighter and broader horizon was swept by the vision. That metal figure emblematized a spirit which, often and often invoked in the temple below with the grandest, richest eloquence of which man is capable, had never gazed before with so real a meaning at the eastern sun.

SUPPLEMENTARY CHAPTER.

ADMINISTRATION OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

March 4, 1861-April 15, 1865.

"THERE lies the most perfect ruler of men the world has ever seen!" said Secretary Stanton in tears, at this President's death-couch; and probably for a eulogy so brief, no fitter one could have been pronounced. Well did that stern subordinate—headstrong, impulsive, born to be unpopular—realize how much of his own splendid opportunity and success in achieving he owed to that generous and genial direction. Abraham Lincoln need hardly be compared with the great rulers of mankind in other ages and countries; it is enough to take him in his most admirable adaptation to the age and country in which his destiny was cast. He clearly understood the thirty millions of Americans over whom he had been placed by the people's choice, and the tremendous task given him by his Maker to be accomplished. Lincoln was not a profound scholar, but his mind was acute and his logical faculties clear and active; he had a lawyer's self-culture to comprehend the relations of republican society; he had studied American political history and problems of government, and no one understood better his country's institutions, State and national, in their practical workings. He had fair public experience, besides; and his excellence as an administrator in affairs lay in his consummate

tact and skill as a manager and director of political forces under the complex and composite system of our American government. His high qualifications in this respect were first made manifest in his own important State of Illinois; and, though not among the chief founders of the new national party which brought him into the Presidency, he promptly came forward as one of its leaders, and, once placed in direction, he guided it confidently for the rest of his life, unapproachable as chieftain and popular inspirer. As President of the United States he harnessed together the greatest intellects of this party—statesmen diverse as the winds in temper and sentiment, better capable than himself to push forward the car of legislation or handle the multifarious details of executive work; and he held the reins over them with infinite considerateness and discretion, conciliating, assuaging rivalries, maintaining good humor, and encouraging each to his greatest work. He kept his cabinet in the closest touch with Congress, and both cabinet and Congress in generous accord with public opinion, which last he carefully watched and tilled like a good gardener, planting seed, nurturing the growth of new ideas, and bringing, in proper time, the ripe fruit. Raw haste, the falsehood of extremes on one side or the other, he sedulously avoided; yet he sowed and cultivated. And, once again, while conducting the cause of the whole Union, of national integrity, he was yet highly regardful of State pride and State magistracy, seeking not suppression, but assistance, as to this element of allegiance; and the harshest military rigor he ever exercised over State rebellion was tempered by clemency, forgiveness, and compassion. Not an insurgent commonwealth of the South did he attempt to reorganize and reconstruct, save

through the spontaneous aid of its own recognized inhabitants and such native and natural leaders of the jurisdiction as were found available; while of border slave States, at first doubtful and wavering in allegiance, because of a divided interest and affection, the two that he grappled most violently became not only stanch to the Union, but converts to emancipation, from their own choice, before war ended. The armed potency, almost unexampled, which this President exercised through four distressful years, was always exercised unselfishly and as a patriot, in the name and for the welfare of the real constitutional government which he represented, and for the permanent welfare of the whole American people. Rarely leaving and never going far from the nation's capital during that entire period, he there came in contact with people from all parts of the land—soldiers and civilians, men, women, and children—and by his rare personality, in whose external expression pathos and humor were remarkably blended, he dispelled unfavorable prejudice and endeared himself gradually to all classes of our people, at the same time giving reassurance as of one genuine, self-possessed, and trustworthy, who knew well his responsibilities and was capable of exercising them.

Lincoln was an American of Americans, the best and noblest type of an indigenous democracy, such as several generations of native independence and self-government had developed in lowly life. He was the ideal of the common American voter—the common citizen—sharing with the average of our race the wish to better, honorably, the conditions of humble origin; proud of his own native land, and desirous that its example to the world should be unblemished. Like the vast majority of Americans, he was conservative

while in progression, and loved that liberty which comes protected by law. Cautious, practical, and with a homely sagacity, notwithstanding high ideals, he yielded not to theory, but to trial, respected customs, and pursued the plans of life with wondrous patience and perseverance. Father of his country, as Emerson has well said of him, the pulse of many millions throbbed in his heart, and their thought was articulated by his tongue. Even as Washington was the typical ruler for a generation bred to traditions of royalty and privilege, so Lincoln suited the common conception for a people long confident of themselves. With him, adventitious birth or wealth went for little; but he weighed all men by their intrinsic worth, giving to each the due ponderance that personal character had won, and avoiding falsehood, whether of the social theorist, who treats dunces and the wise alike, or of the demagogue, who courts meanness only. God's greatest miracles on earth have been wrought out of natural elements, and His greatest tasks committed to men of true, steadfast hearts and simple faith. If this President had no great erudition, in him were happily combined, at least, the qualities for conducting a great social change—a strong intellect, convictions strong when once formed, a hardy physical frame, sound moral sense, and a persevering will.

After all, the real ruler of mankind, and especially of a vigorous and intelligent community, is he who can rule himself; and to that type of men Lincoln certainly belonged. He was plain in manners, unostentatious, unaffected, free, to a remarkable degree, from vindictiveness or fierce passion. Cheery and good-natured by disposition, calm, and even jocular, while others were angry or excited, he would show displeasure by raised

eyebrows, closed lips, or a clench of the hand; but resentment with him seldom went further, and in action he was just, magnanimous, and bore no malice. The display of others' foibles amused more than it offended him, while for real sorrow and suffering he mourned in sympathy. Though a giant in stature he had a woman's tenderness of heart, and he sorrowed deeply over the calamities that necessity compelled him to inflict. Ambitious we may well suppose him to have been, but his ambition was of that lofty and laudable kind that prompts to the general good. From earliest childhood he had known what it was to strive and struggle upward against the world's disdainful regard, yet experience of life made him not crabbed, but kind-hearted, and the poem whose bosom-lines he most loved to repeat rebuked the spirit of mortal pride and taught a chastening lesson. No high ruler ever showed less the caste of race or station in demeanor; and it was Frederick Douglass, the man of colored skin, who pronounced him free from that condescending manner that had impressed him much among other philanthropic friends of his race. It was, indeed, his broad range of sympathy, and his keen appreciation of human nature, with all its faults and failings, that kept him so close to the common heart. Lincoln took the world as he found it, with always a disposition to make it better. Holding before followers and the country the loftiest ideals of public duty, while capable at the same time of using the selfishness of others for the good of the cause, he required no sordid or selfish abuse of official spoils, no cunning organisms of petty tyranny, for keeping himself secure in power; and it was the popular intuition that seldom errs which secured his re-election for another term, rather than that cunning thwart of oppo-

sition which picks out delegates and shuts rivals from the suffrage of the people.

Lincoln was, to a singular extent, representative of the whole American people, the component of all sections of the United States. He foresaw and foretold that in the great struggle between North and South neither side could afford to disbelieve in the courage and intrepidity of the other. He had the unfailing courtesy and honor of a Kentuckian born; but, unlike Henry Clay, he was, in manners and modes of thought, a denizen north of the Ohio River. He had the ingenious fertility for contrivance of a New England Yankee, with, at the same time, the breezy and unconventional boldness of the Westerner. He approached the social problem of his age with an average Northern man's objective dislike of slavery, and yet with something, moreover, of the subjective misgivings over emancipation which were felt by border slaveholders and the more humane of Southern masters. We may recall the various expedients he employed to lighten the coming blow, rather than offend susceptibilities. So, too, as new areas of the South were regained, or made secure, his capacity was shown for soothing Southern fellow-citizens, allaying their former misconceptions, and reconciling their hearts to the new order of things. In short, as Lincoln's biographers* have well pointed out, his blood was drawn from the veins of every section of the Union; and of East, Middle, South, together with pioneer civilizing growth in the great Northwest, his nature equally partook.

Lincoln's peculiar methods as President have been observed in the course of our narrative.† He was true and steadfast to his main public purpose, a present in-

* 10 N. & H, final chapter. † See Vol. VI.

spiration, clearly conceiving the immediate duty to be performed, but borrowing as little trouble as possible for the far future. Eminently practical in statesmanship, his exhortation was to action, and he disinclined to hamper himself by schemes which might not readily yield to circumstances and a coming exigency. "My policy," he would say, "is to have no policy;" not intending this literally, but so that political convenience, or the mercy of exceptions, should give to formulas all needful corrective. "I do not cross Fox River until I come to it," was another saying of his; yet he well apprehended the general direction in which he headed, and simply made his way from point to point, with cautious circumspection, and throwing out skirmishers, so to speak. He thought and felt with the common people, or rather so as to educate them to change with himself; hence expressions, like his point of view, might shift, though in general exhortation he was sound and consistent. It is now conceded that he chose precisely the right moment, neither too soon nor too tardy, for issuing his edict of emancipation, so as to give it actual effect; and so, too, was his time well selected for giving permanent and comprehensive force to this new national policy by the sound process of constitutional amendment. In all things patient and incessantly pursuing, his mind would turn to indirect experiment for gaining the desired end, or so at least as to force the conviction that expedients were useless. He liked to approach reform by the flank before assaulting. "Pegging away," to use his homely phrase, as of one industrious over an humble manual toil, he rounded out his work by dint of a sound intelligence honestly and with constancy applied. For, carefully though he watched the growth of public opinion, and heedful not to get

too far away, he formed and guided opinion, and was no mere waiter for other men. He took the public into his full confidence, and, by message, speech, or open letter, would utter plainly his views and purpose upon critical occasions.

From one of such tenderness and broad affiliation with his fellow-men, one whose favorite weapon had been argument, and not compulsion, this long and sanguinary strife, more bitter and protracted than he himself or most other countrymen could possibly have anticipated, must have truly been a fearful strain. Yet of the wrestlings and agonies in soul that this President underwent, the world knew little beyond noting the ghastliness he would present, with sunken cheeks and hollow eyes, after a night's secret vigil of sorrow, while no words but cheerful ones escaped his lips. His prayerful communings in secret must have been deep and fervent. Few men ever lived with nerves and a constitution to bear responsibilities like these. But he would relax the tension of mind by abandoning himself to frolic and play with his children in the inner apartments of the White House, or by observing the humorous aspect of scenes about him in his audience chamber, or by reading, with keen zest, the pages of native humorists, such as Artemus Ward,* who touched off American life in phases familiar to him. With the jocose manner habitual to him, and little pleasantries towards those whom he happened to accost, he would throw off the burdensome anxieties that must otherwise have broken him down. Lincoln's rare vein of humor, as disclosed in the many authentic stories and

* It was with a chapter from this author that, much to Stanton's disgust, the President regaled his Cabinet, before introducing the historical proclamation with its graver exordium. 6 N. & H. 158.

pithy sayings of his, long since recorded, make him stand out, fresh and original as a public personage, like those early heroes, Greek or Roman, whose lives and characters are described by anecdotes. The piquant zest of whatever he might say was heightened by a quaint dialect and the flavor of a singular personal experience; yet many of his parables were doubtless invented or adapted, on the spur of the moment, to enforce some argument, or, as often happened, to ward off inquiries from others too pointed and searching. Of all rulers who pleased in intercourse, this one, while truthful, was shrewdest in fencing where he was not prepared to express; but on great occasions, strong impulses came welling up from that noble heart, and great thoughts found a most adequate utterance. For, in spite of a rare inelegance of metaphor, such as would grate upon ears polite, Lincoln was a master of style, and, while Chief Executive, wrote more that was clear, forcible, and simply eloquent in literary prose, and sure of enduring, than any other American of that eventful period. He was not only first among historical actors of this Civil War, but its ablest contemporary interpreter besides.

If not wholly free from the commission of minor faults, this Chief Executive was remarkably exempt, as an administrator, from radical error. He was quite at home in American politics; his memory of faces was wonderful, and he knew well or learned readily the statesmen and managers of his times, and took in their characters, one by one, their personal appearance, and their means of helpfulness to his public purposes. He was true to those purposes, honest and to be depended on. He trusted the loyal people, and the loyal people trusted him in return; their predilections were for

peace, and so were his own; and hence for war much had to be learned. As our narrative has shown, it was not in the civilian, but the military aspect of his Presidency that he was seen to grope, to feel out fallibly, to make imperfect estimates of character and capacity, like the average of those at the North who stood behind him. Yet, for all this, he grew in military discretion and knowledge with the years, and, though never pretending to be a technical soldier, he learned to give here a correct supervision, as in all other matters pertaining to a ruler. He experimented with generals of differing temperaments and credentials; he watched campaigns intently in their progress, and studied the battles; nor would he rest, day or night, until the generals were found who could command and conquer. To the greatest of these, as to all others, he gave freely and honorably of the nation's resources, and the fullest confidence deserved. As for war itself, he must have felt like Washington, who declared, when at the same stage of human experience, "My first wish is to see this plague of mankind banished from off the earth."

The fame of Abraham Lincoln, enhanced by the deep pity felt for his sad and sudden taking off—the martyrdom of a misconception—has reached the stars, and will spread and endure so long as human rights and human freedom are held sacred. For Americans his name is imperishably joined with that of Washington, under the designation, "Father," which no others yet have borne—the one saviour and founder, the other, preserver and liberator. Washington's work was as completely finished as one great human life could make it; and had Lincoln been spared to the end of the Presidency for which he was rechosen, the capstone to his monument would surely have been inscribed "Recon-

ciler." For no man of his times could so wisely and powerfully, or would so earnestly, have applied himself to the compassionate task of binding together the broken ligaments of national brotherhood and infusing through the body politic once more the spirit of common harmony and content. Nothing but the clouds of false prejudice and rumor could anywhere have obscured or prevented the rays of so warming and regenerating a personal influence.

NOTE.—The scope and limit of this book forbid more than a single selection from the author's sixth and final volume. The concluding pages of that volume are embraced in the foregoing extract; and for a full and concise narrative of the whole Civil War, in its political and military aspects, during the entire period of Abraham Lincoln's memorable administration, the reader is kindly referred to the author's sixth volume of "History of the United States," which, as a separate work, is known as "History of the Civil War."

INDEX

Abolition. (See Slavery.)
Adams, John, 9; Vice-President, 17; President, 59, 70; character, 72, 212, 239; the two Adamses, 217.
Adams, John Quincy, 166, 191; President, 214, 224; the two Adamses, 217; in the House, 271; death, 337.
Adams, Samuel, 9.
Agriculture, 132.
Alabama, 212, 366.
Alien act, 62.
Alleghany Mountains, 250.
American character, 240; manners, 243; business, 245; industry, 246.
American party, 369.
Ames, Fisher, 37, 54.
Anti-Masons, 254, 273, 369.
Anti-Nebraska party, 388.
Arkansas, 188, 367.
Army, 145, 317. (See Disunion.)
Ashburton Treaty, 315.
Astor, William, 246.

Badger, George E., 368.
Bainbridge, Captain William, 152.
Baldwin, Henry, 282.
Bancroft, George, 340.
Bank, 149, 293.
Barbour, Philip P., 283.
Barlow, Joel, 196.
Bates, Edward, 388.
Benton, Thomas H., 234, 312.
Bernard, General, 164.
Bibb, William W., 139.
Bills of Rights, 131.
Blennerhassett, Herman, 106.
Blue lights, 153.
Bolivar, General, 180, 242.
Bonaparte, Napoleon, 68, 90, 111.
Boston, 165, 354.
Boundaries of United States (1783), 2; (1849) 312, 323, 344.
Brazil, 171.
Breckinridge, John, 64.
Brown, John, 385.
Buchanan, James, 340; President, 374, 390, 391.
Buenos Ayres, 170.
Burns, Marcia, 196.
Burr, Aaron, 70; duel, 93; conspiracy, 106; death, 108.
Business, American, 245.

Cadiz, 204.
Cadore letter, 137, 138.
Calhoun, John C., 66, 141, 192, 201; Vice-President, 215,

229, 250, 255; in the Senate, 258, 313, 394.
California, 320, 345, 347.
Canals, 226, 268.
Canning, George, 203.
Capitol, 45, 69, 195, 396.
Carroll, Daniel, 158.
Cass, Lewis, 355, 375.
Census of 1820, 199.
Central America, 370.
Character, American, 240.
Charleston Convention, 391.
Charlestown, riots in, 370.
Chase, Salmon P., 389.
Chatham, Earl of, 338.
Chicago, 249, 386.
Chili, 170.
Chippewa, 326.
Choate, Rufus, 355.
Cholera, 345.
Cincinnati, 248, 355.
Civil War, 395.
Clarkson, Mayor, 47, 50.
Clay, Henry, 139, 145, 166, 191, 254, 355; death, 357, 403.
Clayton, John M., 255, 368.
Clinton, De Witt, 200, 327.
Clinton, George, 9, 14.
Cobden, Richard, 321.
Commerce, 132. (See Embargo.)
Compromise, Missouri (1820), 187-189; (1850) 355, 366, 367, Missouri compact broken, 367.
Congress, first and second, 14; third and fourth, 39; fifth and sixth, 59; seventh and eighth, 83; ninth and tenth, 104; eleventh and twelfth, 136; thirteenth and fourteenth, 147; fifteenth and sixteenth, 157; seventeenth and eighteenth, 190; nineteenth and twentieth, 214; twenty-first and twenty-second, 228; twenty-third and twenty-fourth, 261; twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth, 293; twenty-seventh, 301, 304; twenty-eighth, 304; twenty-ninth and thirtieth, 317; thirty-first, 343, 352; thirty-second, 352; thirty-third and thirty-fourth, 362; thirty-fifth and thirty-sixth, 374; thirty-seventh, 398.
Connecticut, 274.
Constitutions, State, 129.
Conventions. (See Parties.)
Cooper, Thomas, 39.
Corday, Charlotte, 385.
Corwin, Thomas, 343.
Crawford, William H., 167, 191.
Crittenden, John J., 355.
Cuba, 370, 383.

Dallas, Alexander J., 54, 149.
Danites, 376.
Daschkoff, 191.
Davis, Jefferson, 334, 365, 382.
Davis, John, 272.
Dayton, Jonathan, 56-60.
Dayton, William L., 372.
Democrats (see Parties), 62, 171, 172, 173, 375, 386.
De Tocqueville, 238.
Detroit, 250.
Dexter, Samuel, 78.
Disunion movements, 383, 384, 390, 391, 392.

Dix, John A., 339.
Douglas, Stephen A., 363, 375, 378.
Douglass, Frederick, 402.
Downing, Jack, 267.
Duane, William, 98.
Dutch customs, 243.

Edwards, Jonathan, 56.
Elections, Presidential (1789), 17; (1792) 39; (1796) 59; (1800) 70; (1804) 104; (1808) 136; (1812) 147; (1816) 153; (1820) 190; (1824) 214; (1828) 228; (1832) 261, (1836) 293; (1840) 301; (1844) 317; (1848) 343; (1852) 362; (1856) 374; (1860) 398.
Electoral tie, 71. (See Elections.)
Ellsworth, Oliver, 61.
Embargo, 112.
England. (See Great Britain.)
Equal Rights party, 275.
Erie, 201, 226.
Europe (see Great Britain, France, Spain, etc.; Monroe doctrine), 203.
Everett, Edward, 371, 387.

Farmers. (See Pioneer Life.)
Federalism (see Parties), 12; downfall of, 79; blue lights, 153; the Hartford Convention, 153, 235, 251.
Ferdinand VII, 170.
Fillmore, Millard, 295; President, 352; character, 360.
Financial Distress (1819-20), 181; (1837) 293.
Fisheries, American, 133.
Florida, 178, 326.
Floyd, John B., 393.
Foote, Henry S., 234.
Force bill (1833), 255.
Fort Dearborn, 249.
Fort Sumpter, 392.
Fourier, 246.
France, contest with England, 51; spoliations, 222. (See Bonaparte.)
Franklin, Benjamin, 9, 35, 239.
Free Soilers. (See Republicans.)
Fremont, John C., 372.
French spoliations, 222.
Fugitive slaves, 307. (See Slavery.)
Fulton, Robert, 201, 269.

Gadsby's Tavern, 197, 228.
Gaines, Gen. Edmund P., 327.
Gallatin, Albert, 63, 96.
Garibaldi, Joseph, 242.
Garrison, William Lloyd, 280.
Genet, Citizen, 51.
Georgia, 185.
Gerry, Elbridge, 78.
Ghent, peace of, 149.
Girard, Stephen, 50, 246.
Gold, California, 345.
Granger, Francis, 295.
Great Britain, contest with France, 51; grievances against, 52; Jay's mission and treaty, 52; Napoleon, 111; war against, 145; peace at Ghent, 149; relations (1817-31), 203.
Greece, 242.
Greeley, Horace, 295, 334.

Greenleaf, 69.
Grund, 238.
Grundy, Felix, 255.

Hamilton, Alexander, 5, 18, 24, 37, 54, 64, 90; duel, 93; death, 95, 239.
Hancock, John, 9, 47.
Harper, Robert G., 63.
Harrison, William Henry, President, 301; death, 302.
Hartford Convention, 153, 235, 251.
Hayne, Robert Y., 233.
Helm, Peter, 50.
Henry, Patrick, 9, 102.
Hill, Rowland, 324.
Holy Alliance, 203.
Houston, Samuel, 371, 385.
Hudson River, 201, 243.
Hull, Captain Isaac, 152.

Illinois, 249, 378, 386.
Impressment, 104, 145.
Inauguration of Washington, 17; of John Adams, 59; of Jefferson, 83; of Madison, 136; of Monroe, 157; of John Quincy Adams, 214; of Jackson, 228, 262; of Van Buren, 293; of Harrison, 301; of Tyler, 304; of Polk, 317; of Taylor, 343; of Fillmore, 352; of Pierce, 362; of Buchanan, 374.
Indians, 98, 326.
Industries, American, 133, 246.
Inns, American, 197, 228.
Internal Improvements, 173, 232, 253.
Iredell, Judge James, 56.
Irving, Washington, 243.

Jackson, Andrew, 153, 160, 175, 191; President, 228; force-bill message, 255; second administration, 261; his tour, 265; character, 284; Jackson and Jefferson, 177, 291.
Jay, John, 9, 15, 70, 89.
Jefferson, Thomas, 8, 24, 37; Vice-President, 59, 63, 65, 70; President, 83; appointments, 87; cabinet, 89; second administration, 104; retirement, 119; character, 121, 177, 239, 291.
Jeffersonian Republicans, 165, 173, 297.
Jeffersonian, The, 297.
Jones, Captain Jacob, 152.
Jones, James C., 368.

Kalorama, 196.
Kansas-Nebraska Bill, 363, 366, 370.
Kendall, Amos, 324.
Kentucky resolutions, 64, 235.
King, Rufus, 383.
Know-Nothings, 369.
Knox, Henry, 15, 18, 24.
Kossuth, Louis, 242.

Lafayette, 32, 165, 211.
Lane, Henry S., 372.
La Plata, 170.
Lawrence, Amos A., 246.
Lecompton, 379.
Liberator, The, 280.
Liberty and Union, 237.
Lincoln, Abraham, 334, 335, 377; the Illinois Debate, 378, 381; nomination of, 389;

President, 398; character of, 400; fame of, 407.
Livingston, Edward, 15, 18, 54, 90, 201.
Lloyd, James, 165.
Loco-Focos, 273.
Louisiana purchase, 90, 212, 239.
Lundy's Lane, 326.

Madison, James, 5, 63, 65, 96; President, 136, 147; character, 154.
Madrid, 170.
Maine, 212.
Manhattan Island, 243.
Manners, American, 243.
Manufacturers, American, 132.
Marbois, 90.
Marcy, William L., 333.
Marshall, John, 78, 158, 212, 282.
Martineau, Harriet, 238.
Maryland, 196, 212.
Massachusetts, 12, 212, 239.
McKean, Thomas, 54.
McLean, John, 282.
Methodist Church, 372.
Mexico, 317, 322, 331.
Miranda enterprise, 170.
Mississippi, 366, (river), 249.
Missouri, 187; compromise (1820), 189, 365; repealed, 367, 383.
Monroe, James, 90; President, 153, 157, 161, 163, 165; character of, 190; appearance of, 193; retires, 213.
Monroe doctrine, 205.
Montgomery Congress, 394.
Morgan, William, 255.
Mormonism, 376.
Morris, Robert, 9, 69.
Muhlenberg, Frederick A., 54, 56.

Napoleon. (See Bonaparte.)
Nashville, 355.
National Banks, 273.
Native Americans, 369. (See Parties.)
Naturalization Act, 62.
Nebraska, 363.
Negroes. (See Slavery.)
New Hampshire, 212.
New Mexico, 343.
New Orleans, 345.
New York, 200, 212, 232, 274, 355.
Nicholson, 69.
Non-intercourse, 137. (See Great Britain.)
Nullification, 66, 232, 254. (See Disunion.)

Ohio, 200.
Orders in Council, 116, 138, 145. (See Great Britain.)
Ordinance of 1787, 188, 365.
Oregon boundary, 320.
Osgood, Samuel, 15.
Otis, Harrison Gray, 153.
Otis, James, 9, 18.

Paraguay, 170.
Parties, political, origin of, 9; Whig and Tory in America, 11; Revolutionary, 12; Federal and Anti-Federal, 12; Republicans, 36; ultra Federalists, 70; downfall of Federal, 79; War party, 143;

Democrats, 165; Jeffersonian Republicans, 165; decay of, 173; Democratic Republicans, 173; new party ideals, 215; National Republicans, 253; Democrats, 273, 277; Anti-Masons, 254; Whigs, 274, 353; Equal Rights party, 275; downfall of Whigs, 359; New Party movements, 368; Native American, Know-Nothing Party, 369; the Republican party, 372, 373, 388; Democracy perverted, 375, 386; Chicago Convention, 386.
Pearce, James A., 368.
Peel, Sir Robert, 320.
Pennsylvania, 200, 232, 239.
Perceval Cabinet, 138.
Perry, Oliver H., 152, 179.
Personal liberty laws, 307.
Philadelphia, 45, 355, 370, 372.
Pickering, Timothy, 61.
Pierce, Franklin, 359; President, 362, 375.
Pinckney, Charles, 70.
Pioneer life, 40.
Pittsburg, 372.
Polk, James K., 311; President, 317; character, 339.
Population of United States (1783), 3; (1820) 199.
Portugal, 170, 197.
Potomac, 396.
Pottawatomies, 249.
President. (See Elections; Inauguration.)
Princeton College, 8.
Provoost, Bishop Samuel, 20.
Public disorders, 279.
Quincy, Josiah, 141.
Quitman, John A., 384.
Railways, 268.
Randolph, Edmund, 24, 139.
Randolph, John, 141, 215.
Religion in the United States, 369, 370, 372, 376.
Republicans, 36; National Jeffersonian, 165, 253; New Republican party of 1856, 372, 386. (See Parties.)
Revolutionary parties, 12.
Rhett, Robert B., 382.
Rocky Mountains, 250.
Roman Catholic Church, 370.
Rush, Richard, 47, 203, 355.
Rutledge, John, 54.
Schuyler, General Philip J., 6.
Scott, Dred, 380, 383.
Scott, Winfield, 325, 326, 359, 396.
Search, right of, 104.
Secession. (See Disunion.)
Sedition act, 62.
Seminole war, 177, 178, 326.
Sergeant, John, 355.
Seward, William H., 295, 347, 366, 381, 388.
Single-Term Theory, 308.
Slavery: abolition memorials, 35; trade abolished, 108; condition of, in 1819, 182; Missouri controversy, 187; Garrison and *The Liberator*, 280; slavery and freedom, 307; admission of Texas, 312; Kansas-Nebraska plot, 367; Dred Scott decision, 380; new dogmas, 383.
Small-pox, 47.

Smithsonian Institute, 324.
South America, 204.
South Carolina, 185, 212, 232, 233, 239; in 1833, 257, 391.
Sovereignty, squatter, 365.
Spanish America, revolution in, 169, 242.
Spanish coin, 181.
Spoils of office, 231.
Squatter sovereignty, 365.
Stanton, Edwin M., 398.
State rights, 251, 273.
States. (See Several States.)
Steamboats, 201, 269.
Stephens, Alexander H., 347, 368, 382.
Stephenson, George, 269.
St. Louis, 250.
Steuben, Baron, 18.
Stoddert, Benjamin, 78.
Story, Joseph, 282.
Supreme Court, 282.

Taney, Roger B., 283.
Tariff act (1824), 207; (1828), 232, 252; reduction (1845), 321.
Taylor, John W., 65.
Taylor, Zachary, 325; President, 343; death, 350.
Tecumseh, 325.
Telegraph, 311, 325.
Tennessee, 176, 232, 365.
Territories, 99. (See Different Territories.)
Texas, annexation, 310, 312, 323.
Thompson, Jacob, 393.
Thomson, Charles, 16.
Tippecanoe, battle of, 139.
Tompkins, Daniel D., 157.
Toombs, Robert, 349, 368.
Tories, 11. (See Parties.)
Treasury, independent (sub-), 293.
Treaty, Jay's, 52; for Louisiana, 90; of Ghent, 149; as to Texas, Mexico, etc., 310, 322, 331; Ashburton, 315; Oregon, 320.
Trimble amendment, 188.
Trollope, Mrs., 240, 247.
Twiggs, General David E., 393.
Tyler, John, President, 304, 305, 314.

United States (1809), 127; (1820) 199; (1831) 238.
Utah, 344, 375.

Van Buren, Martin, Vice-President, 262; President, 293; character, 297.
Van Ness, John P., 196.
Venezuela, 170.
Virginia, 64, 200, 235, 273.

Walker, Robert J., 342.
War. (See Army, Indians, Mexico, Navy.)
Ward, Artemus, 267, 405.
Washington, George, 4, 9, 14, 15, 407; President, 17; character, 26; farewell address, 57, 59; death, 67, 239.
Washington City, 68; (1821) 195; (1861) 396.
Watts, James, 269.
Webster, Daniel, 165, 208, 211, 235, 355; death, 358.
Weed, Thurlow, 295, 297.

West, the great, 249.
Whigs, 12, 273, 275, 353; downfall, 359. (See Parties.)
White House, 101, 396.
Wilkinson, General Arthur, 106, 327.
Wilmot, David, 332, 333; proviso, 364.
Winthrop, Robert C., 338.
Wirt, William, 107, 204.
Wise, Henry A., 303, 385.
Wolcott, Oliver, 69.
Woodbury, Levi, 355.
Wright, Silas, 295, 311.

Yellow fever, 47.
Yellowstone River, 250.
Young, Brigham, 376.

THE END